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# THE TIMES

No. 64,834

THURSDAY DECEMBER 23 1993

RK

## President refuses to discuss new allegations of womanising

### I did nothing wrong, insists terse Clinton

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton last night denied trying to buy the silence of security guards who claim they helped to organise and cover up numerous extramarital rendezvous while he was governor of Arkansas.

He also denied any impropriety in his business dealings, promising to co-operate with federal investigators examining a collapsed savings and loan company and the suicide of a White House aide.

Questioned by news agency journalists about claims that he misused public servants, the President insisted that he had done nothing wrong. But he conspicuously refused to address the allegations of womanising which have punctured the euphoria of soaring poll ratings.

In his first, terse public response to the allegations that are captivating Americans, Mr Clinton denied using his Arkansas bodyguards to facilitate infidelities, and when asked if he offered some of the troopers better jobs to secure their silence, he replied: "That absolutely did not happen."

But when asked whether he had really indulged in the extraordinary sexual escapades described, he referred reporters back to an anydne White House statement, declaring: "I just have nothing to say about this." And challenged directly on the charges of involvement with a number of women both before and after his election to the presidency, he replied: "I think we have cleared it up. I just think it is not appropriate in a situation like this for me to do more than I am doing. I'm just going on. I'm going to do my best to do my job. I think that's what I should be doing."

Mr Clinton was speaking during end-of-year interviews arranged before this apparent scandal erupted on Monday, and his evasiveness seemed certain to fuel not extinguish the story. The White House, which for the third day running failed to hold its regular press briefing yesterday, is hoping the storm will pass over Christmas. In the meantime, officials are launching a concerted effort to discredit Mr Clinton's accusers as politically motivated.

While the security men's

As media pressure mounts on the American President, the spotlight now turns on claims of financial irregularities in land deals

charges have rekindled the controversy about Mr Clinton's alleged womanising that dogged his campaign after the former cabaret singer Gennifer Flowers claimed to have had an adulterous affair with him, it is the question of the Clintons' land dealings in Arkansas that could prove the more damaging politically.

Mr Clinton and his wife, Hillary, are coming under increasing fire over their past association with James McDougal, an Arkansas businessman who is the subject of a criminal investigation.



Hillary apparently was aware of Bill's hanky-panky, at least in general terms? At home with the Clintons, page 12

Mr McDougal, owner of the bankrupt Madison Guaranty savings and loan association, is suspected of improperly diverting funds from his failing association to help to pay off \$50,000 in debts from Mr Clinton's 1984 gubernatorial campaign. At the time, Mr McDougal needed favourable treatment from the state to stay in business. He did stay in business, but Madison collapsed in 1989 at a cost to the taxpayer of \$60 million.

Mr McDougal and his wife were also joint partners with the Clintons in an Arkansas

property venture called the Whitewater Development Corporation, for which federal investigators believe Mr McDougal may have organised improper loans, although the Clintons insist they lost on the venture.

On Monday, the White House admitted that officials removed a file on the Clintons' business dealings with Mr McDougal from the office of their old friend and colleague Vincent Foster within hours of his suicide last July. The Clintons gave the file to their personal lawyer, but the President said yesterday that he did not know what it contained.

Federal investigators believe it may be relevant both to the circumstances of Mr Foster's suicide and to their enquiries into Mr McDougal. On Tuesday, Mrs Clinton said she saw no reason why she should release it, and the White House insisted that the First Couple were "entitled to the same privileges as other citizens when it comes to their personal records," but when asked yesterday if it would be surrendered, Mr Clinton promised: "We'll do the best we can to co-operate."

He added: "I have no reason to believe at this time that anyone thinks there is anything in there relevant to any ongoing federal matter, but if anyone thinks we have any relevant information, obviously we intend to co-operate."

The federal investigation is an acute embarrassment for Mr Clinton at a time when his approval ratings had just begun to take off, and while the political fallout is as yet unclear, it could prove damaging. Robert Dole, the Senate's Republican minority leader, yesterday joined the senior Republicans on the House and Senate banking committees in demanding a congressional inquiry into this whole issue. "The American people deserve a thorough and independent review of the whole Madison Guaranty-Whitewater affair,"

First lady's denial, page 8  
David Brock, page 12  
William Rees-Mogg, page 14  
Peter Brooks, page 14

## Travel agents start holiday sales war

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

A PACKAGE holiday sales war is under way after leading travel agents yesterday announced big cuts in prices from Boxing Day.

The four biggest travel agents - Lunn Poly, Thomas Cook, AT Mays and Going Places (formerly Pickfords and Hogg Robinson) - had been secretly preparing their post-Christmas advertising assault but waiting for another group to make the first move.

Scottish-based AT Mays fired the first shot by announcing a 10 per cent cut which was immediately matched by Thomas Cook. Within hours both Going Places and Lunn Poly had gone one better by reducing prices across the board by 11 per cent until January 3.

The agencies dominate Britain's retail holiday trade, which has led to criticism that they are too powerful and that most are linked too closely to tour operators and airlines.

The cuts - which will cost Lunn Poly alone around £7 million in lost commission - should tempt hundreds of thousands of holiday-makers and boost still further a remarkable rise in sales. Thomas Cook claim a 130 per cent increase in sales on last year and tour operators say that two million summer holidays have already been booked.

Sue Ockwell, of the Association of Independent Tour Operators, claimed that the big chains could not reduce their prices without cutting service to a minimum and selling their own travel insurance at a huge profit.

The best bargains are likely to be found in resorts in the Eastern Mediterranean and Florida, where there has been a recent drop in popularity and tour operators have already paid for airline seats and hotels.

Travel news, page 18



A downcast President Clinton meeting the press in the Oval Office yesterday

## Reveller slept off party on motorway

By RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

POLICE found a reveller sleeping off the excesses of his office party on the M4 after passing motorists reported seeing a body slumped in the roadside lane between Maidenhead and Slough in Berkshire.

Steven Galle, 29, apparently believing he was on the hard shoulder, was snoring and unable to stand without help after being abandoned by a taxi driver who feared he was going to be sick in his cab.

Mr Galle, a computer consultant, had consumed beer and schnapps at a night club in Bracknell before hiring a cab to take him home to his wife at Hotspur, near Maidenhead. Traffic managed to swerve and avoid him as he slept on the carriageway on Tuesday night after failing to stagger home across fields.

Last night Mr Galle, who was cautioned, said: "The police were really wonderful, in fact I owe my life to them. But if I ever find out who the taxi driver was, he will definitely be receiving an unseasonal message."

Bob Walker, a motorway patrol constable, said: "It is a miracle he wasn't run over and killed. We kept him in overnight as a precaution. He is a very lucky to have survived - sleeping on the motorway is not to be recommended."

Drink-drive focus, page 6

## South African vote buries apartheid

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

APARTHEID formally ended last night after 45 years when the South African parliament voted itself out of existence. As the parliament voted 237 to 45 to adopt an interim constitution leading to majority rule after the country's first all-race election next April, President F.W. de Klerk, architect of the reforms, said: "We have embarked on a new Great Trek. By accepting a new constitution, we took South Africa over the threshold of history into a new era with all its dangers."

He said South Africa's next parliament would "remove the albatross of injustice, exclusion and discrimination". As the separate development policy disappears, South Africa embarks on a new era of multi-racial politics.

Moments before the historic vote in Cape Town, Conservative MPs and a group of supporters in the public gallery stood to attention and sang the national anthem, Die Stem (The Call). Ferdi Hartzenberg, leader of the Conservatives and the most senior of the hardline white supremacists, grumbled that a monster was being created. "It is a transition to communism," he said.

The voice of a young white man rang out: "You are busy with treason." He was forcibly removed from the gallery. MPs of the African National Congress and its alliance partners stood with clenched fists and cried: "Amandla awethu!" ("Power is ours!")

Speaking at the official closure of the parliamentary session, Dr Hartzenberg said the disappearance of the all-white House of Assembly meant a loss of freedom for Afrikaners. It was not the first time they had lost their freedom and he promised: "There will again be a House of Assembly for our people."

Wind of change, page 9  
Leading article, page 15

## Jackson blames media

MICHAEL Jackson went on television in America last night to deny allegations of abusing young boys. In a live transmission from his Neverland ranch in California, the singer said: "I am totally innocent of any wrongdoing. I know these terrible allegations will all be proven false."

In a four-minute statement, during which he seemed at times close to tears, he blamed the media for whipping up a campaign against him and said he had been subjected to a "horrifying and humiliating

## Major calls on Adams to pick up Ulster's peace gauntlet

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major travelled to the republican heartland of West Belfast yesterday to issue an unequivocal challenge to Gerry Adams to "pick up the gauntlet of peace".

Standing within sight of the Milltown Cemetery, where the IRA buries its "martyrs", Mr Major said the onus was now on the Sinn Féin President, and he rejected his demand for clarifications on the Downing Street declaration. The Prime Minister also reiterated his headline message that there would be no place for Mr Adams in the peace process until he renounced violence.

Speaking exactly a week after the London agreement Mr Major said: "We set out in that joint declaration a pathway to peace. There is a gauntlet down on the table that is marked peace. It is for Sinn Féin to pick it up - the onus is on them."

Mr Major's explicit message to Sinn Féin came as Albert Reynolds, the Irish Prime Minister, delivered a similar message to the Senate in Dublin where he said the declaration was a statement of principles and not a basis for negotiations. On Tuesday Mr Adams demanded unconditional talks with both governments on the future of Northern Ireland. Mr Major brushed this aside yesterday when he said: "No further clarification is needed. We are not going to be drawn into negotiations. We don't play Mr Adams' game."

Mr Major made his comments during what is believed to be the first visit by a British Prime Minister to Catholic West Belfast where Mr Adams was MP between 1983 and 1992. Mr Major, who was on his third visit to Ulster this year, later met the leaders of the main constitutional parties at Hillsborough Castle, and visited troops near the border

in Armagh. At Hillsborough last night the Prime Minister maintained the pressure on Mr Adams when he accused him of adopting delaying tactics.

Asked whether clarification on various points in the declaration might persuade Sinn Féin to go to the IRA Mr Major said: "That is the game of course that Sinn Féin may be playing. Let us toss out a new idea each day in order to buy a little time. Let us decide not to make up our minds on the basis of the joint declaration. I must be blunt, I am not playing that game. He added that although the delay was



Reynolds warns Sinn Féin on principles

frustrating he would not set a deadline for Sinn Féin to accept.

But Mr Major issued a warning: "I don't think one can be strung along forever."

Mr Adams reacted to Mr Major's comments by repeating his accusation that the two governments were sending out contradictory messages. Speaking after a meeting in Dublin of the Sinn Féin council, Mr Adams said: "Sinn Féin believes that, if properly managed, a process to bring about a lasting peace is achievable. In this respect the

Continued on page 2, col 8



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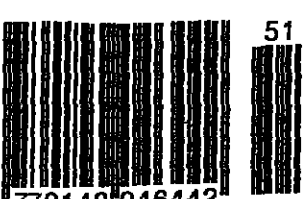
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INDEX	
Arts	31-33
Births, marriages, deaths	16
Body and Mind	13
Books	25
Business	21-27
Chess	5-40
Court and Social	16
Crossword	20
Diary	14
Feature	12
Leading articles	15
Letters	15
Obituaries	17
Sport	36-38, 40
Times Today	20
Times Two Crossword	40
Travel	18, 19
Weather	20
TV & Radio	39

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G MACHINE



## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Universities told to cut costs by 10%

Universities were told yesterday to cut their costs by more than 10 per cent over the next three years to meet the Government's new targets for higher education, which aim to see a reduction in the intake of new students.

The Funding Council, in a circular to vice-chancellors, confirmed that institutions which had failed to put the brake on student numbers would bear the brunt of economies. Detailed allocations would be finalised next month, but universities and colleges would be expected to make efficiency gains of more than 4 per cent next year.

More women than men are studying beyond the age of 16 and many are outperforming males, the Education Department reported yesterday.

## Bomb scare payouts

Commuters whose journeys were disrupted by the IRA bomb scares on Tuesday are to be offered compensation from British Rail's Network SouthCentral division. Although not obliged to pay compensation for delays caused by terrorism, BR will reward passengers for loyalty in the face of adversity. The division's services, including those from Brighton, Eastbourne and other south coast towns, were among the worst hit. A spokesman said: "We like to feel we have a good relationship with our customers and this is one way of showing our appreciation."

## Three die on M5

Two men and a woman were killed yesterday when a lorry ploughed across a motorway central reservation and smashed into their two cars coming the other way near junction three on the M5 near Birmingham. Part of the wreckage burst into flames after the impact. The victims are expected to be identified today.

## Blitz pair reunited



A mother who was separated from her son for 50 years after he was told she died in the Blitz was reunited with him at Heathrow last night. Joan Hillard-Reid, 76, shown above with Keith Potter, 51, of Cape Town, said: "It was wonderful to see him." Mr Potter, who learnt that she was alive last year, has sold his story to a magazine and did not comment.

## By royal invitation...

The Princess of Wales, who recently announced her withdrawal from public life because of media pressure, yesterday visited one of her favourite charities, with a crowd of photographers on the pavement. Selected journalists were invited to the reception in north London for Centrepoint, a charity for the homeless of which she is patron.

## General dies aged 100

Britain's oldest general, Sir Philip Christison, has died a month after his 100th birthday. He died peacefully at a nursing home in the Scottish Borders town of Melrose on Tuesday night. He was honoured for bravery in both world wars. As Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces, South East Asia, he took the Japanese surrender at Singapore.

## THE TIMES

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## Major challenges Sinn Fein to follow peace path without delaying tactics



Mr Major being greeted by security forces at Gough barracks in Armagh yesterday. In Belfast, Democratic Unionists shouted abuse at him

## Deadline on offer ruled out

Continued from page 1

position of the British Government, whether it is prepared to play a positive and pro-active role, is essential."

The Prime Minister's surprise visit to the province amid tight security was the first since he embarked on a frantic round of negotiations with Mr Reynolds which culminated in last week's declaration. He was greeted warmly on the streets of Belfast, but leaders of Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists shouted abuse at Mr Major in Belfast City Hall and hurled bits of paper at him. Cedric Wilson, a former DUP mayor of Castlereagh, in east Belfast, shouted out: "You have betrayed the people of Northern Ireland."

Mr Reynolds's speech was clearly aimed at patching up differences between the two governments, on issues such as a possible amnesty for paramilitary prisoners. He said that Unionists had nothing to fear from articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution which lay claim to the territory of Northern Ireland.

## Softened rules on child support fail to placate critics

By EDWARD GORMAN

CHANGES in the way the Child Support Agency works were announced yesterday but were immediately attacked as inadequate.

The measures announced by Alistair Burt, the junior Social Security Minister, after months of criticism are designed to reduce the impact of sudden increases in child maintenance payments, which have caused difficulties for many second families. They are also meant to ensure that absent parents faced with higher maintenance bills do not lose the incentive to continue working.

Mr Burt said the modifications struck the right balance between the rights of absent parents and their children and had met many of the points raised by the recent Commons select committee report.

From February, new maintenance payments will be phased in over 18 months. Three changes to the formula by which the payments are calculated will increase the minimum income retained by absent parents, helping them to remain in work.

The amount absent parents pay for the care of their children will be reduced by a quarter when they reach the age of 11 and by a further quarter at 14. In many cases the £34-a-year collection fee charged by the CSA will be waived, unless the agency is

Increases in child maintenance are to be brought in gradually and absent parents given the incentive to keep off the dole

collecting maintenance payments itself.

Donald Dewar, the shadow social security secretary, said the Government had failed to address the principal areas of discontent. "The changes announced today by the Government do not amount to the fundamental review that is required. If ministers think that this package will allow them to close the book on the Child Support Agency problem, they are wrong," he said.

David Holder, organiser of the National Campaign for Fair Maintenance, one of the pressure groups set up to protest against the new regime, called the measures a derisory attempt to placate public opinion.

He said the campaign for further revision of how the agency operated would continue. "These changes are only cosmetic. The campaign will continue to press for a radical overhaul of the system, with many test cases to go before the European Court of Human Rights, where we are confident of outright victory."

Mr Burt defended the operations of the CSA but added: "We recognise that many genuine concerns have been expressed about the way the new system is working in detail."

He said he believed the modifications incorporated most of the main proposals of the select committee and he hoped the CSA would be able to get on with its job with the full support of Parliament and the public.

The changes received a cautious welcome from Frank Field, chairman of the select committee, who has received thousands of letters from parents who say they cannot afford payments under the new system. He said the Government had made the right first step but he would expect ministers to respond to further recommendations for change in the future.

Mr Field, the Labour MP for Birkenhead, said he was encouraged that the question of ensuring parents did not go on the dole when faced with higher maintenance bills had been addressed. "That's what the changes are essentially about. We were concerned to see whether people at the bottom have adequate incentive to continue working."

He added that it remained to be seen how many families would be affected by the changes and what impact they would make on the projected £530 million the CSA is set to save in its first year.

## Labour's former scapegoat praised

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ACCOLADES from unlikely sources have greeted Neil Kinnock's donation to charity this week of the £7,000 he received in severance pay on leaving his post as Leader of the Opposition.

Labour politicians, once out of office, are traditionally rehabilitated by an Establishment that no longer feels threatened.

But few can have received such an uncharacteristically glowing tribute as that which greeted Mr Kinnock in *The Sun* yesterday. "Decent, honourable and generous," was the judgment. Could this be the same newspaper that last year warned Britain to turn out the lights if Mr Kinnock won the general election?

Now enjoying widespread praise as shrewd observer of domestic politics, international orator and chat-show host, Mr Kinnock looks fitter and more relaxed.

After Labour's fourth consecutive general election defeat, those who wanted a scapegoat blamed the Labour leader's unstatesman-like image.

Twenty months later, he is depicted as Labour's voice of experience, invited to make speeches across the world and to business leaders.

Formerly goaded as a lightweight in foreign policy, Mr Kinnock has taken a particular interest in international affairs.

"He is now seen abroad as someone who has deep political insight. That view is slowly emerging at home and politics will be better served when it is fully realised," one Labour MP said.



Kinnock: tributes to political insight

## Killer joyrider's penalty 'derisory'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

A JUDGE yesterday admitted passing a derisory sentence on a schoolboy joyrider who killed a child aged four. He said that the law did not allow for a harsher penalty.

Andrew Ellis, 15, knocked down and killed Kevin Downes in August. Kevin was walking near his Liverpool home with his brother and two other children when Ellis reversed round a corner and into the group.

Eight hours later a change in the law increased the maximum penalty in such a case to 10 years. The Children and Young Persons' Act was amended to allow longer sentences for under-18s.

At Liverpool Crown Court, Judge Wickham sentenced Ellis to a year in youth custody and told him: "You escaped a longer sentence, which you deserve, by only a few hours. A sentence of 12 months is derisory."

Members of Kevin's family were in the public gallery. There were cries of "It should be a life for a life" and "It's a life sentence for his mother".

Ellis and two friends had bumped-started the car, which had run out of petrol and been abandoned. He had no idea how to drive and had to be shown by his accomplices. After the accident he ran off, the court was told. He admitted driving without a licence or insurance and failing to stop, but denied failing to report the accident.

In another case yesterday, a motorist was sentenced to 180 hours' community service and banned for two years after admitting that he killed a 12-year-old cyclist by dangerous driving. The judge said that on a scale of seriousness the case was at the lower end.

Craig Willis, 26, was travelling at 72mph on a 60mph road when he saw Robert Rustin pull out of a junction in Clevedon, Avon. He braked but hit the boy at 40mph. Robert, who had been cycling with friends near his home, was taken to hospital but was found to be dead on arrival.

Judge Hagen said: "Whatever sentence I impose on you will not have the same effect as the fact that you will have to live to the end of your days with the knowledge that you caused the death of a 12-year-old boy. However, it seems to me this case is at the lower end of the scale of seriousness."

Marion Page of the pressure group Keep Death Off the Roads said: "The sentence is a joke, really. What good is it going to do the family?"

"The public need to be protected from reckless drivers - these judges don't seem to realise that."

Some union leaders, led by Bill Morris of the TGWU transport union, argued in the General Council that Mr Monks' plan was insufficiently radical. But lay leftwingers were suspicious, seeing in the move a diminution of the influence of key union activists and the creation of an elite of union leaders in the new executive.

Some of the TUC's 200 staff fear job losses but the leaders said yesterday that it was not a staff or job-cutting exercise. Some £300,000 would be spent on retraining and computer technology. The TUC will be formally relaunched on March 1.

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## Housing market looking up

By A STAFF REPORTER

LOW prices and interest rates should help to strengthen the housing market next year, according to a survey conducted by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

Peter Miller, an RICS residential property spokesman, said conditions were expected to improve next year after the recent period of stable house prices.

"The past year has been a period of consolidation. This is set to continue in 1994. We shall see steady but undramatic improvement," he said.

The RICS spoke to 127 estate agents around the country earlier this month in order to compile the survey. It found that there had been nervousness among buyers in the run-up to the November Budget and most were still expecting the Christmas period to be quiet.

Nevertheless, 89 per cent of those estate agents who responded to the survey reported that house prices were steady or rising, compared with December last year when 75 per cent of those agents questioned said prices were falling.

Mr Miller said buyers would remain highly selective and sensitive to price with the result that unrealistically priced homes would remain unsold in 1994.

The survey found there was a shortage of affordable property and a two-tier market was starting to develop. Low interest rates have given buyers strong bargaining power but vendors with negative equity have been unwilling or unable to sell at the prices offered by bargain-hunting buyers.

The report concludes: "This stand-off between buyers and sellers has resulted in a huge number of overpriced and unsold houses while the smaller number of more realistically priced homes have sold quickly."

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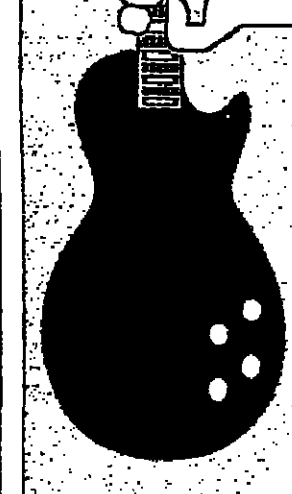
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## London hit-spotter wins Times rock collection

By ROBIN YOUNG



THE TIMES collection of the 100 best rock albums of all time has been won by D. French, of Muswell Hill, north London. He was among 2,000 entrants who tried to predict the top ten albums chosen by *The Times* panel of experts.

Three runners-up, Les Sinclair, of Shetland, Bill Coles, of northwest London, and Clive Zietman, of northwest London, will receive their choice of 50 from the top 100.

The top ten, in order of the judges' preference, and with their comments, were:

1: The Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* (1966, EMI) - "the

first rock album which could never be reproduced live".

2: The Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967, EMI) - "the first album without track spacing, the first with a 'gatefold' sleeve, the first with a free insert, the first with a conceptual opening and closing... this ground-breaking record was piped to the number one spot by just one vote".

3: Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks* (1968, Polydor) - "the combination of Morrison's soulful voice and the chamber-rock backing makes this unique".

4: Lou Reed's *Transformer* (1973, RCA) - "an entertaining as well as influential

album containing some of his best known songs".

5: Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited* (1965, Sony) - "this is Dylan's finest album and it contains in *Like a Rolling Stone* a serious candidate for best song ever written".

6: The Jimi Hendrix Experience's *Are You Experienced?* (1967, Polydor) - "spectacular debut album... the sheer noise generated was startling and awesome".

7: The Beatles' *Revolver* (1966, EMI) - "There's a long history of groups moving from the weird to the conventional in search of fame. Here the Beatles were hurtling in the opposite direction".

8: Neil Young's *After the*

*Goldrush* (1970, WEA) - "Neil Young perfected a solo style that has won him a cult following among at least three generations".

9: Bob Marley and The Wailers' *Catch a Fire* (1973, Island/EMI) - "makes our top 100 over the more polished *Burnin'*, for its historical significance".

10: Otis Redding's *Otis Blue* (1965, Atlantic) - "Unarguably the greatest soul album".

Readers were not required to replicate the order in which the judges placed the top ten. The rest of *The Times*'s top 100 have been listed over the past month in *The Times Magazine*.

## CORRECTION

Mr Richard Dawson asks us to make it clear that he does not "work for a firm of solicitors" (report, *Doctor demands better deal for hospital victims*, December 20). He owns the firm.



# 'Good Samaritan' killed in vicious random stabbing

By Emma Wilkins

A RETIRED nurse was stabbed to death in a vicious and apparently random attack after opening her front door to a woman who asked to use the telephone.

Patricia Morgan, 75, a widow from Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, was known to neighbours as a Good Samaritan who was loved by children and who took in and looked after stray animals. A police spokesman said she was stabbed several times with "extreme violence" on Tuesday afternoon.

Det Supt John Williams, leading the enquiry, said: "This was a violent attack on an elderly woman living alone and it has shocked everyone."

A knife was found at Mrs Morgan's home on the

Wildmill housing estate in Bridgend, which is within walking distance of three psychiatric hospitals.

Mrs Morgan had lived on the estate for 30 years. It is understood she may have met a woman in the street shortly before answering her front door.

A woman, said to be in a distressed state, was seen asking for the address of her infant son who was being fostered by a local family.

Ethel Law, 64, who lives near by, said Mrs Morgan had helped to direct the woman to the relevant address. "It was so typical of Pat to take the girl to her baby," Mrs Law said.

"She was a lovely lady. She had a heart of gold and would

do anyone a good turn but look where it got her. Her only extravagance was a monthly trip to the charity shop where she loved to rummage around for a bargain."

Mrs Morgan's husband, York, died ten years ago and the couple had no children but she received a pre-Christmas visit from her nephew and niece just before she died. They telephoned the house to say they had returned safely to their homes in London and Brighton and were told of their aunt's death by police.

Mrs Morgan, who was planning to spend Christmas alone, suffered from arthritis. She worked as a nurse in a local hospital until her retirement.

Peter Foley, a local councillor, said she was held in high regard by everyone who knew her. "She was a gentle, caring lady who devoted her life to relieving other people's suffering," he said.

But Mr Foley also expressed concern that some patients from the local psychiatric hospitals had been released into the community without adequate follow-up care.

"I have raised cases in the past where ex-psychiatric patients have been dumped in the estate with inadequate supervision from the community psychiatric nurses," he said.

Jenny Willoughby, director of mental health services for Bridgend and District NHS Trust, said patients sometimes wandered from the hospital grounds but added that she had not received any complaints. None of the 300 patients are locked in.

Mrs Willoughby said: "The only complaints I have had are from patients themselves who feel they are blamed for anything that happens in the community."

"We do not release patients unless they have a place to stay, either with relatives or at a housing association."

Denise Antoinette Tormabell, 23, was charged last night with the murder of Mrs Morgan. Ms Tormabell, of Sam, Mid Glamorgan, is due to appear before magistrates at Bridgend today.



Castle Combe, Wiltshire, where Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler will be reunited in the £20 million mini-series *Gone With the Wind II*

## Frankly, Castle Combe does give a damn

By Andrew Pierce

AN ENGLISH village has been chosen for the long-awaited reunion of Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler. Castle Combe, Wiltshire, will be taken over by a Hollywood company for a sequel to the film based on Margaret Mitchell's classic novel *Gone with the Wind*.

In contrast to Butler's indifference ("Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn"), the village is delighted to have been chosen for Miss O'Hara's return from the United States in pursuit of an inheritance. The decision was made by executives of CBS, which is producing the £20 million, eight-hour television mini-series *Gone with the Wind II*.

Castle Combe (population 347), which last year won a best-kept village competition, is no stranger to film crews. In the 1960s the 15th-century buildings were the backdrop for the musical *Dr Doolittle*

and this week Noel Edmonds filmed a Christmas Day special on the banks of the river By Brook.

Filming is expected to begin in March on the sequel written by Alexandra Ripley, from Charleston, who specialises in Deep South historical novels. It will be shown in 40 countries, with Timothy Dalton and Joanne Whalley-Kilmer in the roles immortalised by Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable. Sir John Gielgud will also appear.

Hugh Barnes, the village sub-postmaster, said: "It is exciting. I have been here nine years and never known anything like this. Many people remember Dr Doolittle with great affection."

Martin Chubbie is equally pleased. The 500-year-old, 36-bedroom Manor House Hotel, of which he is manager, will be one of the prime locations.



Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable in the original cinema roles created in 1939

## Woman 'may be hiding killer'

Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

A WOMAN could be risking her life by hiding the escaped killer Tony Pilditch, police believe. Pilditch, who murdered a woman in 1978, fled while on a shopping trip from Broadmoor hospital last week.

He suffers from paranoia and was being treated with drugs. Police say that without the drugs he will become a danger to anyone in his company. They think that he might be staying with a prostitute or someone he knew before he was jailed.

Chief Inspector Charles Nelson, the Thames Valley officer leading the search, said yesterday: "I don't want to paint a picture of Tony Pilditch walking around like a coiled spring waiting to attack someone. But he has been on two drugs — one anti-depressant and one anti-psychotic — to cure his paranoia and give him feelings of well-being. These drugs will now have worn off and that makes him a risk to the public."

"In certain circumstances, where he has something to

drink and is alone with a woman, there is a particular course of behaviour, he could be highly dangerous."

Pilditch admitted murder after being convicted in June 1985 of grievous bodily harm, false imprisonment and carrying an offensive weapon. He was sent to Broadmoor when his health deteriorated.

Mr Nelson said Pilditch was resourceful and intelligent and had been a productive patient at Broadmoor. But he added: "If his medication has worn off then his paranoia will have increased."

Police say there is no link between Pilditch and the murder of Fiona Wilson, a prostitute killed in Doncaster four days after his escape.

The two Broadmoor staff who were with him when he escaped in Reading have been suspended and an internal enquiry is being carried out. Police are to discuss the hospital's security arrangements with the management on January 19.

## Pizza firms vow to keep delivery deadlines

By Dominic Kennedy

PIZZA makers in Britain who guarantee speedy home deliveries have vowed to continue with the promise despite calls from safety organisations to follow the US, where the practice has been scrapped following a series of road deaths.

Dominos's Pizza UK will continue its 30-minute delivery guarantee, while Perfect Pizza and Pizza Hut will also carry on giving customers £1 off pizzas delivered late.

James Tye, director general of the British Safety Council, said he had been contacted by 15 pizza deliverers in the past two years, complaining they had been injured on their way to addresses.

"A lot of these kids are riding without licences and without insurance. If I wasn't good on the brakes I would have knocked one or two over myself. Part of the condition of the job is that they have to get the pizza there in a very short period of time. It's really a hazard. It's an invitation to speed."

Thomas Monaghan, the president of Domino's Pizza in America, announced on Tuesday that he was scrapping the 30-minute offer after losing a multimillion-dollar law suit. A St Louis woman who was hit by a delivery driver who jumped a red light was awarded \$750,000 actual damages and punitive damages of \$78 million.

Dominos's Pizza launched the policy in 1984 and began receiving law suits within two years. By 1988, one American was killed by a pizza delivery driver for every 11.5 million pizzas sold.

In Britain, however, companies claim that delivery drivers are more typically preyed upon by robbers, who order food from bogus addresses then assault the deliverers, than they are involved in road accidents.

Tony Sheriff, managing director of Perfect Pizza, said the American jury decision was "incredible" and would be studying it before announcing any change of policy.

## Letterbomb Tartan terrorist sent to prison for 12 years

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

AN EXTREME Scottish nationalist paramilitary group has vowed to step up its terrorist campaign after one of its number was jailed for 12 years yesterday.

Andrew "Tosh" McIntosh, 38, was convicted of running a letterbomb campaign in an attempt to further the cause of the Scottish National Liberation Army (SNLA).

McIntosh, a small, balding, stooped figure, was found guilty of conspiring to force the British Government into setting up a separate government north of the border.

Sentencing McIntosh, of Aberdeen, Lord Morison said: "These activities have caused

serious disruption in Scotland and very serious alarm, and the crimes which you have committed are extremely grave ones."

The court was told that McIntosh obtained firearms, ammunition, explosive substances and detonators with the intention of endangering life, damaging property and causing explosions.

He was found guilty on 11 charges. McIntosh sent devices to Dounreay Nuclear Plant in Caithness, the Scottish Office in Edinburgh and the headquarters of Anglian Water in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The device sent to Anglian Water exploded, injuring a woman employee.

Explosives experts told the court that the devices were so

detailed they thought they were real. One described them as the best hoax bombs sent on the UK mainland.

McIntosh, described in court by one of his friends as "quiet as a mouse", had a passion for guns. He joined the SNP before moving to the more radical Seed of the Gael organisation. Finally he set himself up as a cell commander with the SNLA, colloquially known as the Tartan Army.

Even before the jury had retired, the SNLA issued a communiqué through its "commander-in-erle" threatening to slaughter the "enemies" of the country. The letter, sent from the Dublin home of Adam Busby, said: "We have killed before and we will do so again."

## Dinosaur eggs tell their story

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE fossilised eggs of dinosaurs are giving up their secrets more than 65 million years after they were laid, thanks to the work of Scottish scientists.

Two eggs at the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow are the latest to be examined. If they do contain embryos, it will be the first time they have been found in the eggs of saurpods

dinosaurs, a class in which the *Diplodocus* and *Brachiosaurus* belong.

The Glasgow eggs, like many others that have circulated on the international market in the past year, came from a huge find in China. The museum bought six in July for £15,000 but the discovery that two may contain embryos greatly increases their value.

Dr Neil Clark, curator of palaeontology, says the eggs will be examined by

Terry Manning, a technician with a Leicester firm that buys and sells fossils.

Mr Manning believes he can tell which eggs contain embryos by looking at them through a microscope. If the dinosaur foetus was well developed before it died, the process of decay inside the egg affects the appearance of the shell, even when fossilised. Using X-rays to examine the eggs is useless, he says, because everything inside is fossilised and there is insufficient contrast to detect any bones.

Mr Manning has examined about 40 eggs and believes 10 per cent contain embryos. In the others, the eggs died before any skeleton had developed so there is nothing worthwhile inside them.

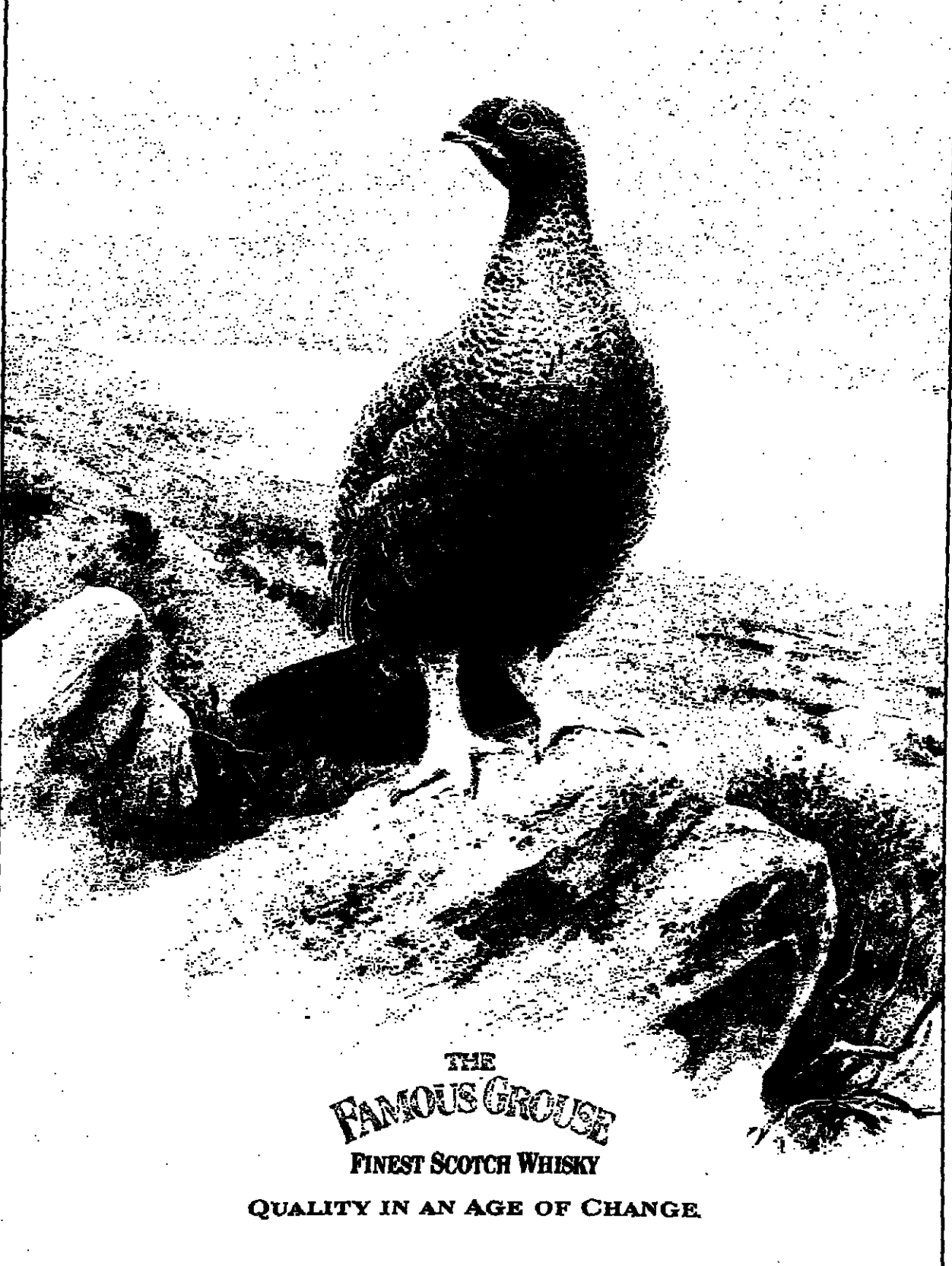
He has extracted a skeleton from one egg and has almost finished preparing a second.

When an embryo is identified, a plaster cast is taken of the egg so that there is a record of it before it is chiselled open to tease out the fossil bones from the rock matrix. Dr Clark says this will tell palaeontologists a great deal about the life and reproduction of dinosaurs.



Terry Manning goes to work on an egg

## RAISED IN THE HIGHLANDS.



THE FAMOUS GROUSE  
FINEST SCOTCH WHISKY

QUALITY IN AN AGE OF CHANGE.

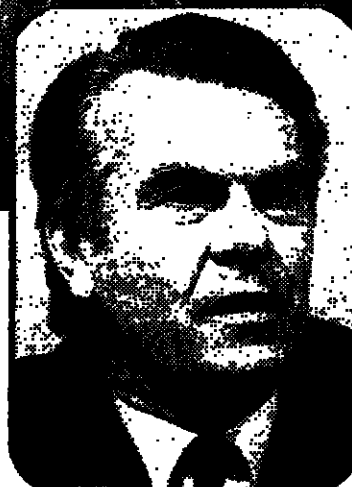
# ...On Earth, Peace...



"We won't accept the partition of Bosnia" (Douglas Hurd, statement in Sarajevo, 17 July 1992)



"The international community will not accept the acquisition of territory by force. Nor will it accept the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina" (John Major, official statement of the EC Presidency, Edinburgh, 12 December 1992)



"We have to convince the Muslims that they are not going to be the victims of Realpolitik" (Lord Owen, interview, 27 September 1992)

## Good Will Toward Men.

**THE STATE OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA AS RECOGNISED BY THE UNITED NATIONS, APRIL, 1992**



**THE PARTITION OF THE STATE OF BOSNIA BY THE STOLTENBERG OWEN PLAN, DECEMBER 1993**

More than 200,000 people have been killed in Bosnia since April 1992. At least 300,000 have been wounded. More than 2 million people have been driven from their homes. An EC report estimates that 20,000 women have been raped. Towns and villages have been devastated. In cities such as Foca, Bijeljina and Banja Luka, mosques which have stood for centuries have been systematically dynamited and bull-dozed. In all more than 1000 cultural monuments have been destroyed. A war is being fought against Bosnia's present, its future and even its past.

On 8 April and 13 September 1993, the International Court of Justice in the Hague granted Bosnia-Herzegovina interim measures of protection against 'Yugoslavia' (Serbia and Montenegro). The Court held that there was a prima facie case of genocide being committed by Serbia against the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Article I of the Genocide Convention of 1948 states that "the contracting parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and punish."

As a signatory to the Convention, Britain is therefore bound by law both to prevent and to punish genocide. Instead, as the principal supporter of the arms embargo, it has acted to deprive the Government of Bosnia of means to defend its population, while compelling its President to sit down with well-armed war criminals whose genocidal aggression has continued unchecked.

The Stoltenberg-Owen plan now does precisely what Hurd, Owen and Major promised not to do. Instead of punishing genocide, it rewards it. Instead of defending the democratic rights of Bosnians, it ignores them. Instead of providing for the two million refugees to return home, it ensures that this will never happen. Instead of insisting upon an undivided Bosnia, it allows international borders to be changed by force.

The Bosnian Government, legitimately elected by the majority of its citizens, has stood throughout this war for democracy, pluralism and the rejection of violence. "Are you in favour of a sovereign and independent Bosnia-Herzegovina, a state of equal citizens and nations of Muslims, Serbs, Croats and others who live in it?" That was the question asked in the Bosnian referendum of 1 March 1992. An absolute majority of Bosnians answered 'yes'. Their democratic will has been consistently betrayed by the EC, the UN and the International Mediators.

If you are prepared to accept genocide, the redrawing of borders by military force, and the 'ideal' of the ethnically pure state, please do nothing. If not, then write at once to protest against legitimising the greatest crime to be committed on European soils since 1945. Write to 10 Downing Street, to your local MP, to the press. Please send a copy to:

**The Alliance to Defend Bosnia-Herzegovina, 40/41 Conduit Street, London W1R 9FB.**

(The Alliance is a cross-party, inter-denominational association of UK citizens committed to justice for the people of Bosnia, which needs all possible support.)

مكتبة من الأصل



# Sexual pervert who killed 12-year-old girl jailed for life

BY RICHARD DUCE

A SEXUAL pervert who murdered a 12-year-old girl as she walked home from school was jailed for life at the Old Bailey yesterday.

A jury refused to believe that Keith Collard, a loner disowned by his family, had not intended to kill Katrina Monk after he dragged her from an alleyway at gunpoint and into his garden shed.

Valerie Gaughan, Katrina's mother, hugged the prosecution barrister after the jury returned a murder verdict against Collard, 24, after two hours of deliberation. Collard, unemployed, of Enfield, north London, had admitted manslaughter but denied murdering Katrina last May.

He shook visibly and almost fell backwards in the dock as the jury announced its verdict. Judge Denison said: "There is only one sentence the law allows me to pass and that is one of life imprisonment."

Katrina was ambushed by Collard, who had armed him-

■ A 24-year-old loner who collected pornography and stole women's underwear ambushed schoolgirl in alleyway

self with an imitation Browning pistol, as she took a short-cut home down an alleyway alongside the back garden of his parent's home.

The following day her body was found in nettles near by with a plastic bag taped over her head. Collard had suffocated her after subjecting her to a sexual assault.

Collard was obsessed with sexual fantasies and had a collection of pornographic magazines and women's underwear stolen from neighbours' washing lines.

When not playing computer games in his bedroom or reading his magazines, he spied through binoculars at schoolgirls taking the short-cut down the alley.

Outside the court Mrs Gaughan, 37, said: "I am just glad he has got what he

deserves. He does not deserve to be in our thoughts after what he has done. I don't want him to go to sleep tonight believing we are thinking of him."

During the four-day trial, Collard said he had wanted to satisfy his sexual urges by touching a woman's body. He had pointed on the girl, who looked older than her age, held a replica gun to her head and dragged her into the garden shed. She was screaming and when she tried to escape after the assault he had put his arm around her neck to stop her.

During his summing up the judge told the jury: "You may think the saddest aspect of this tragic case is that Katrina met her death because she was, by chance, in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Collard kept Katrina's body hidden in his shed but when police investigating her disappearance began, house-to-house enquiries he moved her into the patch of nettles.

When first questioned, Collard said he had been working on his computer at the time of the murder but on June 5 he went to a police station to claim he had seen a girl matching Katrina's description while repairing a lock on the garden gate. He then broke down and admitted the killing before taking police to wasteland where he had dumped Katrina's blazer and bag.

Collard, who had never been in trouble with the police before, admitted after his arrest he had a fetish for taking women's underwear from washing lines near his home. Police found nearly 40 pairs in his bedroom at the house he shared with his mother, a solicitor's secretary, and his stepfather, a van-driver.

Mrs Gaughan said she hoped to work with the counselling organisation, Victim Support. "I want to help the victim support group. I want to help other families in our position."

## Famous hospital to remain on site

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

GREAT Ormond Street hospital will remain on its present site, a junior health minister said yesterday, just 24 hours after North East Thames Regional Health Authority announced that it hoped to merge the world-famous children's institution with nearby University College Hospital in central London.

Tom Sackville was attempting to allay fears for the future of Great Ormond Street in response to the authority's assertion that single speciality hospitals do not offer the best conditions for patient care, research and teaching.

Mr Sackville said: "Whatever decisions may be taken about its future management arrangements, Great Ormond

Street is and will remain one of the greatest children's hospitals in the world. Its future is not in doubt."

His comments nevertheless left open the possibility that Great Ormond Street could be run as a joint NHS trust with University College London hospitals, itself a merger of University College and Middlesex hospitals.

Under the plan put forward by North East Thames, the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery would vacate its site next to Great Ormond Street and merge with the Royal Free hospital in Hampstead. University College London hospitals could then move onto the vacant land and merge with Great Ormond Street.

Managers at the children's hospital have said they would fight the plans, claiming that its continued independence was vital to the future health care of young people.

North East Thames has asked Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, to defer applications for trust status and ask them instead to work together on a joint application, "building on the strength of the two institutions and working towards both being on a single site providing a range of local and specialist services."



Sackville: seeking to allay future concerns

## KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### PCA Qualifier

IN the third round of the PCA World Championship Qualifier in Groningen Ukrainian Grandmaster Alexander Beliavsky seized the lead by defeating the young Russian star Vladimir Kramnik. The British representatives also distinguished themselves by winning brilliant games and moving up the field. Michael Adams defeated the Bulgarian Kiril Georgiev while Julian Hodgson overwhelmed the Estonian Grandmaster Lembit Oll.

Leading scores are Beliavsky 3 points with Michael Adams, Evgeny Bareev (Russia), Joel Benjamin (USA) and Alexei Shirov (Latvia) all 2.5. Former British champion Julian Hodgson as well as pre-tournament favourite Visly Anand (India) both have 2 points.

The top seven finishers from Groningen will go on to join Nigel Short in quarter-final matches to be held in 1994 to determine the next championship challenger to Garry Kasparov in 1995.

Here is Michael Adams' brilliant sacrificial win. A cascade of sacrifices starting with 23... Nxc3 leads to a forced checkmate.

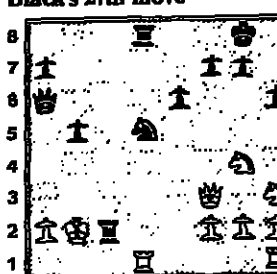
White: Kiril Georgiev  
Black: Michael Adams  
Groningen

### Caro-Kann Defence

- |   |      |     |
|---|------|-----|
| 1 | g4   | c5  |
| 2 | g4   | d5  |
| 3 | Ne3  | Ne4 |
| 4 | Nc4  | Nd7 |
| 5 | Bc4  | Ng6 |
| 6 | Ng5  | e6  |
| 7 | Qe2  | Nb6 |
| 8 | Bd3  | h6  |
| 9 | N5f3 | c5  |

- |    |       |      |
|----|-------|------|
| 10 | dxc5  | Bxc5 |
| 11 | Bd2   | O-O  |
| 12 | O-O-O | Ne4  |
| 13 | Bb5   | Bd7  |
| 14 | Bxd7  | Qxd7 |
| 15 | Nh3   | Qc5  |
| 16 | Kf1   | Nd5  |
| 17 | Bc1   | Rd8  |
| 18 | Oe4   | b5   |
| 19 | Ke1   | Be7  |
| 20 | Qe4   | Qe6  |
| 21 | c3    | Bb6  |
| 22 | Ne5   | Nxc3 |
| 23 | Ng4   | Nxc3 |
| 24 | bxc3  | Bxc3 |
| 25 | Bb2   | Rc4  |
| 26 | Qf3   | Bd2  |
| 27 | Kd2   |      |

Diagram for position after Black's 27th move



White resigns  
The justification is 30 Kd2 Nb4+ 31 Ke1 (or 31 Kc3 Nc2 mate) 31... Nc2 mate.

### Top Pairings for Round Four

These are Beliavsky - Shirov, Adams - Bareev, Benjamin - Gulko and Anand - Serper. Julian Hodgson faces the Russian Grandmaster Oleg Romanishin.

### Chess Quiz

There are 50 book prizes on offer in the chess quiz in tomorrow's Weekend section of The Times.

Winning Move, page 40

## Vicar quits after lover has baby

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A VICAR has resigned after an affair with a married parishioner that led to the birth of a baby boy.

The Rev Gareth Miller, of All Saints, Leamington, Warwickshire, was disciplined by the Right Rev Simon Barrington-Ward, Bishop of Coventry, after news of the birth in September reached diocesan officials. The vicar's affair with Evelyn Morris began when she worked as a parish secretary at All Saints in the town centre. Their baby has taken his father's name.

When Mr Miller announced last month that he was leaving All Saints, his wife Christine said her husband did not want to comment. At the time the Rev Lawrence Mortimer, diocesan communications officer, said the vicar was going through a "crisis of faith brought on by mental exhaustion". He said the vicar had admitted to personal problems.

Mr Miller has since spent some time at a local diocesan retreat. The whereabouts of Mrs Miller and her four children are unknown. Mrs Morris's husband is understood to be in Wales. Yesterday Mr Mortimer said he was not surprised that "circumstances" surrounding Mr Miller's departure had been made public and added that a "more responsible ministry" would now take charge of All Saints.

He said: "The congregation has been let down, as has the bishop, who took the necessary disciplinary action. It has been a bad and sad experience for all concerned and caused a lot of pain."

"The bishop gave Mr Miller time to consider his future and relieved him of his duties immediately, expecting his resignation, and got it."

"Our task is to ensure that people who were let down and who were hurt are being well cared for and that the church can move forward to a future where the ministry is a good deal more responsible and where the needs of the congregation are properly met."

Retired clergy are to take over the running of services until a new vicar is appointed. Over Christmas the Rt Rev Clive Handford, Bishop of Warwick, will lead services.

## Fat called BAT keeps the waistline in trim

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

FAT is a genetic issue, US scientists have discovered.

Those lucky enough to produce large amounts of a fat called brown adipose tissue (BAT) can tick into the Christmas fare with complete confidence that it will not settle around their waists. More BAT, less fat, is the succinct version of the research reported in today's issue of *Nature*.

Proving the role of BAT in obesity has not been easy. Brown adipose tissue contains more of the cells' energy-producing devices, the mitochondria, than does ordinary fat. Those mitochondria have long been suspected of burning up dietary calories before they can find their way to the hips or the waistline. Now the

theory has been put on a sounder footing by research at Beth Israel Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. Through experiments on mice, a team led by Dr Bradford Lowell provided good evidence that brown adipose tissue is the key difference between the lean and the plump and "a valuable new model that may aid studies of human obesity and insulin resistance."

There seems no easy way in which the necessary genetic changes could be made in human beings, so the future for those deficient in BAT is a choice between a generous physique and an endless round of diets and exercise.



The writer Jeffrey Bernard, photographed recently at his legendary haunt, the Coach and Horses in Soho. Bernard helped to make that corner of London raffish with his tastes for tall vodkas and fast women but now he complains that Soho "is in its hideous death throes", that it has become "as boring as Lanzarote, as squalid as Times Square, as porn-ridden as Amsterdam". Joe Joseph, writes, "Newcomers wishing to become what is laughably known as 'Soho characters' have missed the boat by 30 years," Bernard writes in

*The Oldie* magazine. He even bites the hand that fills his vodka tumbler, declaring that Norman Balon, landlord of the Coach and Horses, has "all but emptied" the pub with his "egotism and what passes for his wit". Mr Balon dismisses Bernard's barb: "Maybe he's got too old for Soho. My pub's full." Albert Frederick, of the Soho Society, thinks Bernard's gloomy depiction is "a load of cobbles". He says: "Soho is booming. It's no more sleazy than usual. I was born in Soho in 1925 and it was sleazy then."

## Bosnian children recovering

BY KATE ALDERSON

THREE of the wounded Bosnian evacuees who arrived in Britain on Monday in Operation Angel underwent surgery yesterday and are recovering. Faruk Caticbusic, 7, had a two-hour operation at the Midlands Centre for Neurosurgery in Smethwick to remove shrapnel from his brain.

Damir Karic is stable after an operation for water on the brain at Walsgrave Hospital, Coventry, yesterday morning. The one-year-old, accompanied by his mother, is expected to make a speedy recovery.

Alan Handaric, a one-year-old with a congenital heart complaint, did not need open-heart surgery at Groby Road Heart Hospital, Leicester. Instead a blockage in one of his heart's main valves was removed in an uncomplicated operation, to the relief of his mother and five-year-old sister.

Suad Zukic, 25, who accompanied his injured brother, Senad, 9, to Heartlands Hospital, Birmingham, said yesterday that Senad had narrowly escaped having his leg amputated in Bosnia. It is not yet clear what surgery the boy will have to undergo.

Enir Nefic's mother, Hasna, was delighted when doctors told her that her son, aged three, did not have leukaemia as previously thought. Further tests will be carried out at Birmingham Children's Hospital, where his condition is stable.

## Coroner attacks care policy

BY A STAFF REPORTER

COMMUNITY care was criticised by a coroner yesterday after he recorded a verdict of death through lack of care on a homeless woman. The former hospital scientist died from hypothermia among debris in a London basement.

Monica Gibson, 49, retired as chief scientific officer of St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, on medical grounds eight years ago and had been undergoing psychiatric treatment. She was evicted from her home in Paddington in 1991 for not paying rent.

Dr Paul Knapman, the coroner for Westminster, said the death of Miss Gibson was not at all a happy story, with Christmas coming and with all the disadvantaged people on the streets of London. "This case demonstrates the shortcomings of so-called community care. Some years ago this woman would have been safe and warm and cared for in an institution."

Raymond Tiney, the coroner's officer, said that after her eviction Miss Gibson been found wandering on the streets and was taken to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, but absconded. He agreed with Dr Knapman that it appeared that no government or charity organisation had made any arrangements for Miss Gibson after her retirement.

Her body was found among refuse and dustbins in the basement of flats in Upper Berkeley Street in November.

## Petrol prices favour Scots by 27p a gallon

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

MOTORISTS in southern England are paying up to 27p a gallon more for petrol than drivers in Scotland.

A check by FHH Vehicle Management Services, Britain's biggest fuel credit card group, discovered that filling up with super unleaded petrol in Southampton costs 252.4p a gallon or 55.6p a litre.

In Glasgow an average gallon of super unleaded costs 225.5p (49.67p) while the national average is 243.4p (53.61p). 9p a gallon cheaper than the Southampton price.

FHH discovered that holi-

daymakers leaving from Dover should fill up before they hit the South Coast. All petrol prices were the highest in Britain's busiest ferry port.

The November Budget, which put up prices by 3p a litre on average, has already added £5,000 to the annual fuel bill of a company with the average fleet of 100 cars.

However, there is much worse to come. FHH estimates the cost of a gallon of petrol will pass the £3 a gallon (66p a litre) mark by 1996 and then go on to £4 (86p a litre) by the end of the century at the latest.

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# Lawyers seek compensation for bungling county courts

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of complaints over inefficiency and administrative bungling at London county courts have been lodged with the Lord Chancellor's Department in the past six months, prompting compensation payouts totalling about £40,000.

In four London courts alone there have been nearly 500 complaints over six months and the compensation paid out totalled more than £25,000.

The state of the county courts service, which handles civil claims involving up to £50,000, is disclosed in a report by a joint committee of barristers and solicitors. The report has found high levels of dissatisfaction among solicitors who use the courts daily. In some courts, solicitors and their clients endure long waits for appointments, poor handling of case files and frequent loss of files. Most courts suffer from insufficient and inadequately trained staff and "woefully inadequate or non-existent" facilities.

Timothy Stow QC, chairman of the committee of lawyers that produced the report, said: "Solicitors do not usually complain: they are more inclined to shrug and get on with the next case. So if there is this level of complaint they must be feeling quite aggrieved."

He said the result was that litigation would be more expensive for the client. "If solicitors have to spend their time chasing up court officials over appointments or files or have to take cases out of the

list then it is going to lead to delays, frustration, extra expense and disappointment."

The compensation relates to complaints at four courts that they investigated: Central London, which was formed last year from Bloomsbury and Marylebone, and Westminster (348 complaints); Lambeth (17); Mayor's and City (13) and Willesden (118). The level throughout all London will be higher.

County courts are struggling with a huge rise in workload since the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 came into force, devolving many of the bigger cases formerly dealt with by the High Court. The report expresses "real doubts" as to whether the system can cope adequately with this extra workload, which it says has not been matched by an equivalent rise in judge-power.

The report warns the Lord Chancellor against implementing plans to widen the scope of the small-claims court until it is clear the judges can cope. It finds the main problems are inadequate staff training, insufficient technology and unsophisticated filing systems. "The organisation of the average London county court has been described by one circuit judge, rightly in our view, as a cottage industry."

The committee, members of the London Common Law & Commercial Bar Association and London Solicitors' Litigation Association, calls for a radical review of the county courts system by management consultants.



Shoulder-high jollity at the Tom Smith factory, Norwich. "Jokes must not be topical," the managing director said. "We are already making crackers for Christmas 1994."

## Wit from the inside of a cracker? You must be joking

BY ALAN HAMILTON

PAPER hats may split at dinner tables on Christmas Day but it is unlikely that sides will. However much you spend on crackers, you cannot find a decent joke.

Bottom of the range this year is a £2.99 box of 12 from Sainsbury, each containing a paper hat, plastic necklace or key-ring and a dreadful joke. Sample: "What is an octopus? An eight-sided cat." The same store's super de luxe range comes in at £14.95, containing paper hat,

gold-plated key-ring or lace handkerchief — and a dreadful joke. Sample: "Why did Sir Lancelot have 500 pairs of spectacles? Because the (k)night has a thousand eyes."

An estimated 130 million crackers are sold in Britain every year, without a single shaft of wit among them. "How do burglars get in? Intruder windows." Oh dear. "Why did the gangster cut off the legs of his bed? Because he wanted to lay low for a while." Help. "Doctor, doctor, I think I'm turning into a snooker ball. Well, you'll have to get

to the end of the cue." Oh mother, pass the hanky.

Cracker manufacturers have rules about jokes. Rodney Timson, managing director of the Norwich-based Tom Smith Crackers, said: "Jokes must not be racist or sexist, and above all they must not be topical: we are already making crackers for Christmas 1994." Peter Cole, head of South Green, a Welsh cracker maker, has banned jokes about the royal family or divorce this year because his crackers occasionally find their way on to the

Christmas dinner table at Sandringham. "All our jokes are of the schoolboy variety; the cornier the better. We have a stock of 2,000." Jokes had to be simple because people were in no state to work out a clever punline after a heavy meal.

The only way to avoid the pain of mind-numbing humour is to pay a great deal of money: very expensive crackers contain no jokes. Asprey, the Bond Street jewellers, offers a range at £500 a dozen, containing silver key-rings or ostrich-skin pill-boxes. One cracker in each box

contains a £100 gift voucher for the store but mercifully there is not a joke in sight.

Harrods' top line, containing silver cufflinks or silver collar strengtheners in a leather case, or a miniature carriage clock, had sold out at £195 for six. "I think they contained a motto," a spokesman said. Of course, Harrods would purvey nothing so vulgar as a joke. Not even a good one.

Leading article and Letters, page 15

## Christmas breathalyser figures show little change

### Police want campaign to focus on older drivers

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

CAMPAIGNS against drink-driving should be focused on middle-aged and elderly motorists, police said yesterday.

Anti-drink-drive campaigners also want a review of the Christmas effort after initial figures published yesterday showed little change on the position a year ago.

Senior police believe that targeting certain age groups could help to cut drink-driving further. Officers say that while many young people have largely accepted the "don't drink and drive" message, campaigns should focus on older people who might not have done so.

Figures released by the police yesterday show that almost 6 per cent of motorists breathalysed in the first phase of the Christmas drink-drive campaign were over the limit, compared with

7.5 per cent last year. There were 1,042 positive breath tests out of 17,602 drivers breathalysed between 6am on Sunday and 6am yesterday.

David Williams, chief constable of Surrey, said that the reduction in the number of positive tests was "welcome news, but as the position has changed very little from last year, this shows that people are still drinking and driving". The total number of breath tests was also slightly down, at 17,602 compared with 17,629 last year, 20,245 in 1991 and 27,758 in 1990.

Anti-drink-drive campaigners were rather disappointed at the figures and questioned whether it was now time to revitalise the message, which some suspect is in danger of becoming stale.

John Knight, of the Campaign Against Drinking and

Driving, said the figures were going in the right direction but it might soon be hard to get publicity for anti-drink-drive campaigns. "News has to be new. Anti-drink and driving campaigns are not new. There may be a case to think about the situation we now find ourselves at. The last thing we want is for the public to say: 'Oh, not another anti-drink-drive campaign.'"

This year's advertising campaign marks a switch of tactics from shocking the public to appealing to their emotions. The £1 million campaign features a girl at a party waiting for her boyfriend to arrive. The telephone rings and she is told that her boyfriend — who had stopped off for a drink — had been involved in a fatal accident.

Letters, page 15

#### CHRISTMAS DRINK DRIVE CAMPAIGN 1993

Force	1993	1992	Force	1993	1992
Avon & Somerset	101 (225)	16 (28)	Lincolnshire	282 (312)	3 (15)
Bedfordshire	222 (148)	21 (11)	Merseyside	210 (132)	22 (34)
Cambridgeshire	343 (426)	10 (12)	Metropolitan	4,251 (3,172)	180 (84)
Cheshire	238 (197)	19 (16)	Northumbria	150 (275)	3 (17)
City of London	67 (49)	12 (5)	Northamptonshire	75 (222)	7 (7)
Cleveland	128 (112)	8 (8)	North Wales	10 (10)	10 (12)
Cumbria	198 (194)	10 (10)	North Yorkshire	325 (257)	19 (21)
Derbyshire	494 (172)	12 (10)	Nottinghamshire	163 (160)	12 (12)
Devon & Cornwall	323 (343)	24 (41)	South Wales	345 (855)	17 (57)
Dorset	112 (232)	13 (21)	South Yorkshire	87 (27)	10 (37)
Durham	35 (291)	16 (22)	Staffordshire	214 (257)	12 (20)
Dyfed-Powys	159 (159)	6 (14)	Suffolk	152 (205)	12 (20)
Essex	854 (1,350)	51 (44)	Surbiton	59 (267)	25 (3)
Gloucester	118 (182)	4 (11)	Surrey	130 (243)	21 (22)
Gwent	1,920 (1,350)	98 (105)	Sussex	1,185 (1,824)	36 (50)
Hampshire	725 (546)	35 (35)	Swansea	117 (88)	27 (35)
Hants	179 (174)	14 (20)	West Midlands	378 (312)	54 (60)
Hertfordshire	112 (154)	16 (16)	West Yorkshire	227 (482)	45 (50)
Kent	488 (723)	20 (24)	Wiltshire	314 (241)	16 (30)
Leicestershire	345 (298)	27 (23)			

Figures supplied by ACD

## Emergency surgery for Cookson

Dame Catherine Cookson, the best-selling romantic novelist, will spend Christmas in hospital after undergoing emergency surgery.

The Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle upon Tyne said the 87-year-old writer was poorly but stable after an operation on her colon on Monday night. She had recently returned home after treatment for a blood disorder.

## Sailor's body

The body of a Polish sailor was recovered from the river Medway in Kent. A second is missing and a third was rescued after they fell in while returning to ship.

## Reliant case

A charge against a Reliant Robin driver — Colin Slack, 25, of Buxton, Derbyshire — of driving dangerously during a police chase, is to be heard in a Crown Court.

## Game foul

Six hundred homes in Bury and Dulverton, Somerset, were blacked out for two hours when a pheasant shoot peppered power cables.

## River victims

A father and son killed when their car plunged into the river Nidd were named as Kevin Bullock, 40, and James, 7, of Scotton, North Yorkshire.

## Boy for trial

A boy aged 16 was committed for trial at Totton, Hampshire, on three blackmail charges involving more than £100,000.

## Greenwich reinstates childminder with golly

BY ANDREW PIERCE

A CHILD MINDER who was suspended because she had a golly in her toy cupboard has been reinstated by Greenwich Council in southeast London.

Deena Newton, 50, was authorised yesterday to carry on her work after being suspended for six weeks — and the antique golly can stay. She can also carry on reading Noddy stories to her charges.

Mrs Newton, of Thamesmead, southeast London, had her licence withdrawn after a council inspector objected to the presence of the toy and

Noddy books. The matter was resolved after Mrs Newton held a meeting with an assistant director of social services. The Labour-controlled council, which backed down yesterday after questions were raised in the House of Commons, insisted it had all been a misunderstanding.

Mrs Newton was not convinced. "If it had not been for the publicity I don't think this matter would have been resolved. I received my new certificate through the post with a compliments slip but no apology."

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## WEEKEND



A NEW CHILDREN'S CAROL specially commissioned for The Times with words by George Mackay Brown and music by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies

PETER BARNARD imagines the Wenceslas family Christmas; and Times writers reveal their plays for keeping the children amused

JANE MacQUITTY celebrates the best New Year champagne

FRANCES BISSELL concocts a delicious instant Christmas pudding

RUDOLPH the (real) red-nosed reindeer goes shopping in Scotland

ANNE McELVOY

chases turkeys in Moscow

ROUND-THE-WORLD YACHTSMAN

Mike Golding anticipates Christmas alone

DERWENT MAY

considers the origins of the turkey

PLUS: Quizzes to keep those brain cells buzzing — the jumbo crossword, bridge, chess, computer games and celebrity memory teasers; children's listings, full of ideas for occupying the youngsters from walks to steam train trips; and a guide to the best New Year sales

## Finding the words to ask for help

BY RUTH GLEDHILL

THE 500,000 children in the UK who suffer from speech and language impairment are only a fraction of the number who need help, says Afasic, a charity that helps children and young adults to overcome such difficulties.

These children can appear normal but their difficulty in understanding the concepts that underpin language means they need therapy to have any hope of a happy adulthood.

When a baby does not feed properly, refuses eye contact and makes little or too much noise, a mother might suspect a serious problem. Parents say that many who raise their fears with their doctor are dismissed as neurotic or over-zealous.

children met this week to share their concerns in the Brighton home of Lizzie Batten, whose daughter Charlotte, 6, cannot speak. The group is one of more than 50 across the country which support families and lobby for improved speech therapy and educational services. The East Sussex group campaigned successfully for a new speech and language unit in Brighton, to be officially opened next month. The Times is appealing for donations to Afasic to help such families and to increase

awareness of the problem. At least one in twenty youngsters has difficulty in speaking or understanding what is said to them.

Many have little or no physical or intellectual disability. Some can be taught to speak within a few months with speech therapy and, although problems with understanding language might remain, they can lead relatively normal lives.

Unlike physically disabled children, those with speech impairment appear at first glance to be normal and at second glance to be badly behaved or mentally disabled. Charlotte is no exception. A bubbly child, at first meeting she appears cheerful and lively. But after four weeks at a local school, Mrs Batten received a letter from the headmaster saying that

Charlotte had to go because "we have not been able to contain or influence her behaviour and protect other children and staff".

Charlotte has now been accepted into a school for autistic children, in a class for those with above-average IQ but with behavioural problems.

Linda Lascelles, the group's chair, spent months trying to find out what was wrong with her daughter Robyn, 5, before discovering she had a "semantic pragmatic disorder". Robyn cannot find the right words when she speaks or answer direct questions.

Mrs Lascelles said: "You cannot kiss these children and make their disorders go away. All you can do is make it as good for them as possible."

I would like to help children and young people who have speech and language impairments:

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# Bosnian lies mean nobody home by Christmas

FROM EVE-ANN PRENTICE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT, IN BRUSSELS

THE war would be over by Christmas, the Serbs said — and that was a year ago. Since then there has been seemingly endless action replays, with beaming Serb and Croat warlords promising never to lift a finger in violence again.

"Not another single Bosnian need die," Radovan Karadzic, the Serb leader in Bosnia-Herzegovina, said in a ceasefires ago in the summer. Irma Hadzimiratovic, lying in London's Great Ormond Street Hospital is, along with thousands more, proof of the lie. Irma was crippled in a shell burst which killed her mother.

The protagonists were at it again this week, poring over maps and declaring in Geneva and Brussels that they are edging towards a solution, but the prospect of a Christmas peace deal evaporated last night with the warring sides still far apart after two days of wrangling.

Willy Claes, the Belgian Foreign Minister, said last night: "We will have to wait for the next few days or possibly weeks to see what the results are. There is no agreement until everything is agreed." The Serb, Croat and Muslim-led Bosnian government factions did make some

London: A senior Tory MP added to growing opposition towards the deployment of British troops in Bosnia beyond spring (Michael Evans writes). Speaking on BBC Radio 4, Sir Nicholas Bonsor, chairman of the all-party Commons defence select committee, said: "I anticipate that we are likely to see them through this winter and withdraw them some time next summer."

progress yesterday — but mostly agreeing on principles rather than on matters of substance.

So where will it all end? The international community has had remarkably little impact on the course of the war. Some say there have been 76 rounds of peace talks and John Mills, spokesman for Lord Owen, the European Union negotiator, says he has lost count. The fighting has dictated the course of all these negotiations. By high summer the Serbs and Croats had effectively captured all the land they could hope to take and it was their idea, not Lord Owen's, to talk about dividing Bosnia along ethnic lines. The Vance-

Owen plan was regularly hailed in the West as "the only act in town", but the only real act has been the armies on the ground with carried on largely regardless of Western threats and pleading. The embattled Muslims have begun to fight back after being slaughtered by Serbs and then Croats and have clawed back much of the land lost to the Croats in central Bosnia since last summer.

Harris Silajdzic, Prime Minister of the Muslim-led government, says the West in Bosnia and is in danger of unravelling civilisation throughout Europe. Lord Owen has blamed President Clinton for prolonging the war by not backing the Vance-Owen plan strongly enough. The answer probably lies, however, where it all began, with the armies on the ground. The Vance-Owen plan involved a highly complicated map which none of the warring parties were ever enthusiastic about.

The talks now focus on an answer which may not be idealistic — division along ethnic lines — but which is realistic. The principles have been agreed: the Muslims get 33.3 per cent of Bosnia's territory, the Croats 17.5 per cent



President Milosevic of Serbia, left, wants his Bosnian protégés to cede enough land to the Muslims to end UN sanctions against his country and the war, which President Tudjman of Croatia is also finding costly



pressure for UN sanctions to be imposed on his government. However the West faces a dilemma because sanctions could also encourage the Muslims to continue the war while both its enemies sink into economic catastrophe. Mr Milosevic wants his Bosnian Serb protégés to cede enough land to allow sanctions against Serbia to be suspended.

With all these conflicting aims it is possible that an agreement in principle will be reached early next year but that fighting will go on at least until the spring. All sides want peace by then because they know the West wants to pull out peacekeeping troops by then if no settlement has been reached.

Such is the viciousness of the Bosnian war that even when peace is declared revenge squads are likely to pursue a guerrilla war, perhaps for years. The 80th anniversary in June of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo is likely to be marked by sniper shots around the city.

Belgrade: Mr Milosevic's Socialist Party has increased its seats in the Serbian parliament by a quarter after last Sunday's election but has failed to secure an absolute majority.

and the Serbs the remaining 49.2 per cent. The Muslims must also be able to trade and for this they need access to the sea and to northern Europe. Although the principles have been agreed, there is much to be resolved over which bits of land go to the Muslims and over the future of Sarajevo, the capital. Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, the special representative of the UN Secretary-General, want the city to be administered by the UN and Mostar, where 55,000 Muslims are besieged by Croat forces, to be under EU control. The Sarajevo plan has been rejected by the Bosnian government but all three sides have agreed to the Mostar proposal.

Diplomats and military observers believe the Muslims want the war to last at least until the spring so they can try to win back the land they want. Yesterday the Bosnian government army launched a heavy attack on Bosnian Croat forces (HVO) in the strategic Lasva valley. Independent witnesses said. Doctors at the Nova Bila hospital near Vitez said one girl was killed by

shrapnel and 28 people had been wounded, 23 of them HVO soldiers. President Tudjman of Croatia and President Milosevic of Serbia have differing reasons for wanting the war to end soon. Mr Tudjman does not want to bear the economic cost of more fighting over the Serb-held enclave of Krajina. He is also aware of growing

## President takes personal command of intelligence service in security shake-up

## Yeltsin sacks ministers in new push for reforms

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday pledged that the poor showing of Russia's democrats in parliamentary elections would not lead to a reversal in reforms or to a feared hardening of the country's stance towards the West. He also ruled out the prospect of a coalition government but indicated that he intends to conduct a thorough reshuffle of ministers and advisers in order to create a more open administration.

The Russian leader announced that he intended to create his own political party after complaints by reformers that he had damaged the democratic cause by standing aloof from Russia's Choice, the main democratic bloc, and said that he intended to stay in office until the end of his full term in June 1996.

The Russian Government would also remain in office, he said, but would be restructured to cut staff numbers and make it more efficient. He was taking direct control of state mass media but claimed the move would help ensure freedom of the press.

Mr Yeltsin played down the risk of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the far-right Liberal Democrats, becoming President, saying: "I don't think that this is as dangerous as some of the media are trying to portray it." He said that he would use the newly passed constitution to guard against neo-Fascism.

Looking tired after his recent back trouble and delivering his comments in stilted voice, Mr Yeltsin was anxious to show his understanding with voters' frustrations and avoid the high-handed tone he often strikes in public appearances. He admitted that Russians were suffering from a feeling of humiliated national pride and that a third of the armed forces had voted for Mr Zhirinovskiy, saying: "It is too much. We are worried about this."

Mr Yeltsin stood by Yegor Gaidar, his radical Economics Minister, despite the implicit demand of Viktor Cherno-

myrdin, the Prime Minister, that Mr Gaidar should resign. "Gaidar stays," he said. "That means the course of reforms which he is conducting with the President and the Government also stays." The Russian leader did not reveal planned changes in his Government, but said the structure of multiple deputy ministers would be trimmed and that some full-time ministers would go.

He was ambiguous on the question of how he intended to handle Mr Zhirinovskiy in the new parliament, where the Liberal Democrats have one-seventh of the seats. He would be prepared to co-operate with the ultra-nationalist figure "if his work in the parliament is devoted to the good of the people and country".

The President unfolded plans for a shake-up in Russia's security services, emphasising that he would take personal responsibility for the setting up of a counter-intelligence service to replace the Security Ministry, which was abolished on Wednesday. "The KGB, the Security Ministry, these were the last strongholds of the former Soviet totalitarian system," he added. "There will no longer be political surveillance of our people any longer."

Nikolai Golushko, the Security Minister and former chairman of the Ukrainian KGB, remains as head of the new service. Mr Golushko is not like a man about to launch an invasion by the Slav hordes.

Later, however, in this idyllic Austrian village, he sounded warlike enough when he claimed that Russia had a secret weapon called Elipion. If the West competed for influence in Russia, he said, it could trigger a civil war, and that would be "a very dangerous situation for Russia and the world because of the Elipion weapons which only Russia has and nobody else. They cannot be detected and there is no defence against them."

He said the weapons were non-nuclear but had "the capacity to annihilate the whole world". Warning the West to keep out of Russian affairs, Mr Zhirinovskiy said Russia's stock of nuclear and chemical arms could "easily slip completely out of control" in a Russian civil war "instigated by certain Western quarters".

All of which sounds like more of his bluster, except that he is not funny any more, if indeed he ever was. As an Estonian deputy said two years ago: "When he first appeared we thought he was a good joke, then we thought he was a bad joke, and now we don't think he's a joke at all."

Mr Zhirinovskiy keeps denying that he is an extreme nationalist, but he chose some interesting political bedfellows on his first trip to the West after the success of his Liberal Democratic Party in Russia's recent elections. After



Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the Russian neo-Fascist leader, at Vienna Airport before meeting a retired Austrian businessman who was a former SS volunteer

## Zhirinovskiy warns West of doomsday weapon

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN REICHENFELS, SOUTHERN AUSTRIA

Bumping along at 18,000ft somewhere over Austria in a Fokker 50 in turbulence, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of Russia's neo-Fascists, does not look like a man about to launch an invasion by the Slav hordes.

Later, however, in this idyllic Austrian village, he sounded warlike enough when he claimed that Russia had a secret weapon called Elipion. If the West competed for influence in Russia, he said, it could trigger a civil war, and that would be "a very dangerous situation for Russia and the world because of the Elipion weapons which only Russia has and nobody else. They cannot be detected and there is no defence against them."

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Mr Zhirinovskiy keeps denying that he is an extreme nationalist, but he chose some interesting political bedfellows on his first trip to the West after the success of his Liberal Democratic Party in Russia's recent elections. After

a stopover at Munich Airport, where he met Gerhard Frey, leader of the extreme-right German People's Union, this village was his next port of call. It lies in Carinthia, a stronghold of Austria's populist anti-foreigner Freedom Party, led by Jörg Haider.

His host was the retired Austrian businessman Edwin Neuwirth, a former youthful volunteer in the SS. "Press reports on Zhirinovskiy are blown out of proportion," claimed the one-time Nazi soldier, who has also claimed that he did not know about the gas chambers.

Mr Zhirinovskiy insisted to the assembled press that the Western view that he is an extremist was a fabrication. "It is propaganda and a lie, maybe it's put out by people who are paid by the West... I oppose all discrimination, it does not matter against whom," he said. He also denied that he or his party was anti-Semitic. "We want normal relations with Jews and Israel and we never had a problem with them."

Most of what he said is the sort of saloon-bar rhetoric to be heard in every town from Volgograd to Vladivostok and could be dismissed as nonsense — except that his party gained 23 per cent of the votes in Russia's recent elections.

Many in Russia fear his electoral success is the first stage on the road to a Fascist state with him at the helm. His next target is the Kremlin and a victory in the presidential elections, probably the ultimate post-Soviet nightmare scenario. "I will get 60 per cent and Yeltsin will only

get 10 per cent," he said. Mr Zhirinovskiy's demands are an eclectic, potentially deadly cocktail of nationalist aspirations.

In the past he has called for the return of Finland to Russian sovereignty and suggested that radio-active nuclear waste be buried alongside the border with the Baltic states if they fail to respect Russian minority rights. He has said that suspected criminals should be shot in the streets after a court-martial and has accused the Kazakh and other governments of allowing the rape and murder of Russian children.

His latest area of expertise yesterday was the Balkans. "In no case should Russian troops fight on the Serbian side, but the conflict there must be regulated. But neither should there be an invasion of Turkish troops to Serbia. The first Turkish army is ready to go to Serbia to fight. But if Austria and Serbia called Russia for help, Russia would probably go. I am a Balkan specialist and I know."

On one level his attraction for the German and Austrian extreme right is a little bizarre, since Germany and Russia were enemies in the Second World War. But logic was never Mr Zhirinovskiy's strong point. "There are some circles who say if I came to Germany I would be endorsing the extreme right," he said, adding that he was in contact with many parties including liberal ones in Italy, Slovenia and Bulgaria.

Mr Zhirinovskiy yesterday cancelled an interview with a German television channel that was to have been broadcast last night.

## Taipei and Peking fail to reach agreement

BY JONATHAN MIRSKY EAST ASIA EDITOR

THE first talks between China and Taiwan on Taiwanese soil for 44 years broke down yesterday over the issue of sovereignty. Both the Peking and Taipei regimes have claimed to be the legitimate government of all China since 1949, when Chiang Kai-shek fled with his defeated army to Taiwan.

It had been hoped that the issue of hijacking — nine mainland airliners have been diverted to Taiwan since April — could be reconciled, together with issues such as smuggling, fishing disputes, and the fate of more than two thousand illegal Chinese immigrants in Taiwan.

However, on each question Peking maintained that Taiwan, a "rebellious province", could not make decisions as this would be a challenge to the sovereignty of the People's Republic.

Negotiators on both sides were careful to use moderate language in spite of the breakdown in talks.

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YOUR DOCTOR has a free booklet about healthy heart care. It advises:

1. Stop smoking.
2. Less fat, sugar, salt.
3. More fibre and starch.
4. Not too much alcohol.
5. Watch your weight.
6. Take regular exercise.
7. Learn to relax.
8. Check blood pressure.

#### Heart maintenance

Garlic, taken daily as part of your fitness plan, could also help to maintain a healthy heart and circulation. Because for many people it could help to keep their blood fat and cholesterol levels normal.

**Richest in allicin**  
Garlic's main active agent is allicin. The world's richest source of allicin is garlic grown organically in China. The Chinese have used garlic for health for 4,000 years.

#### Why Kwai is best

Kwai garlic pills are made with the highest grade of Chinese-garlic. Whole cloves, grown organically and dried slowly to remove the water, nothing else. Garlic oil products use boiled garlic and analysis by independent labs confirms that they give you little or no allicin.

#### The strongest

The garlic in Kwai is 100% pure Chinese-garlic, probably the strongest you can buy and richest in allicin yield.

#### Odour controlled

If Kwai is so strong, why can't you smell it or taste it? Because Kwai doesn't produce its allicin until the coating dissolves in your digestive system.

#### Three times a day?

Research suggests that your garlic intake is best spread across a day. That's why you're advised to take two Kwai pills three times a day.

#### Or once a day?

In order to save a few pence, you may be tempted to try garlic tablets or oil capsules described as one-a-day. But you should first ask yourself, "Do they have enough active garlic to help with day-long heart care?"

#### Vastly stronger

Three facts you should take to heart:

1. Kwai garlic is probably the strongest in the world and richest in allicin yield.
2. One-a-day tablets may produce only a fraction

of the allicin of a single Kwai pill.

3. Kwai pills could be more useful in aiding all-day heart maintenance.

#### Anti-oxidants

Anti-oxidants are valuable in helping to remove "free radicals", highly reactive by-products of the body's metabolism. Recent research, done independently in USA and Germany, and presented at an international Congress, has indicated Kwai's anti-oxidant properties.

#### \$12 million research

Since 1981 Kwai has spent \$12 million on garlic and heart research with more than 2,500 people. No other garlic product has made such a commitment to its customers' health.

#### No. 1 in Europe

Over 90% of Britons who take garlic pills prefer Kwai. Kwai is Europe's No. 1 health supplement brand, used by over three million people every day.

Nine out of ten people who try Kwai stay with Kwai.

**Kwai®**  
Strong Chinese-garlic pills to help keep your heart healthy.



President Yeltsin explaining in Moscow yesterday why he decided to disband the Security Ministry

Letters, page 15



# British pullout leaves Belize adrift in a sea of troubles



Price: his party lost after more than 30 years in power

FROM MICHAEL WELLS  
IN BELIZE CITY

BELIZE, for some considerable time the most stable country in Central America, enters a dangerous new era on New Year's Day when Britain, which has ensured its survival for at least the past quarter of a century, hands over its defence responsibilities to the Belizean Government.

The military threat from Guatemala, the reason for the continued British presence after Belize became independent in 1981, officially no longer exists. The vacuum is, however, being filled by drug trafficking, illegal immigration and administrative corruption.

Formerly British Honduras, Belize is in a curious post-colonial position, since nobody wants Britain to leave. The Belizean Government has been desperate for British protection from Guatemalan territorial claims and armed threats. Apart from anything else,

**■ Belize faces an uncertain future, threatened by corrupt politicians, drug runners and Guatemalan territorial claims. For many, the departure of British troops could not have come at a worst time**

the people of Belize like the British troops, not least for the income they provide.

The troops have helped to stabilise an ethnic mix of peoples. Their withdrawal will save \$9 million annually, a pittance in terms of Britain's overall defence cuts. Basically, it is all about freeing two infantry battalions for duty in Northern Ireland.

The last British infantry unit, 45 Commando Royal Marines, is now completing its tour, handing over to the 2nd Gurkhas, who in turn will hand responsibility for defence to the local Belize Defence Force when British withdrawal is completed next October.

Belize, a nation the size of Wales but with a population of only 131,000, has just three surfaced roads, and then only partly. The rest are potholes linked by mud and rocks. Bridges get washed away in flash floods in the south, where annual rainfall can be close to 160 inches. There most of the country is dense jungle, with tree savannah and farming in the northern region.

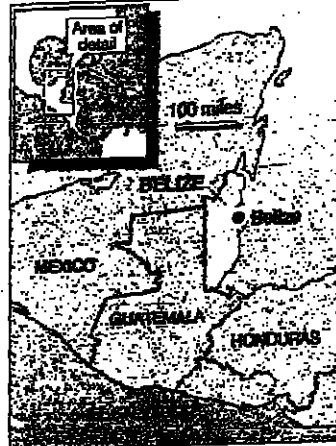
Every day 45 Commando is out scouring the jungle towards the western and southern borders with Guatemala, as British forces have been doing for years. Six-man patrols are dropped by helicopter into remote locations,

carrying 80lb packs in temperatures up to 120°F. From a jungle base they patrol for some ten days, making sure the Guatemalans know they are active and getting to know the local settlements.

The marines visit jungle villages and plantations of the Mayan Indians, chat with local headmen to hear their problems, monitor illnesses and glean intelligence on drug-running, illegal immigrants and illegal logging. They greet the village children by name and give out sweets and biscuits from their ration packs.

Officially, all patrols are accompanied by a couple of members of the Belize Defence Force or the police, but sometimes the locals simply do not turn up. They have learnt that the marines' style of patrolling is energetic and their enthusiasm sometimes lapses.

There are ominous signs for the future. The country is plagued with constant infiltration by illegal immigrants happy to work on



plantations for only a third of the already low Belizean wage. Some of these are "legal illegals" encouraged by local politicians seeking to increase their voting strength. There have even been times when British troops have been told by politicians to slacken their monitoring of drugs and

immigrants. Cattle rustling and associated violence from across the borders is on the increase. The police are largely unarmed and powerless.

In elections last June 30, the People's United Party of George Price was narrowly defeated after more than 30 years in power by the United Democratic Party of Manuel Esquivel, the present Prime Minister. A long-time British resident said: "People were finally sick of all the corruption and the general mess."

There is, however, no immediate likelihood of change. Belizeans say they have no confidence in the 2,000-strong, lightly armed defence force. Some believe the United States may step in to fill the vacuum, but this is doubtful, bearing in mind the Clinton Administration's budget problems and its reluctance to become again involved in Central America. Uncertainty, for now, seems the only certainty.

## First Lady's denial wins media notice for Clinton sex tale

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

HILLARY Clinton's robust denunciation on Tuesday of the allegations about her husband's marital infidelity while Governor of Arkansas has achieved one thing. It ensured that the story finally made the front page of almost every newspaper in the country.

"I'm not interested in Bill Clinton's sex life as Governor of Arkansas," R.W. "Johnny" Apple, Washington bureau chief of *The New York Times*, had declared on Tuesday. By yesterday morning America's premier newspaper was carrying as its second lead story the First Lady's denial of accusations it had not reported in the first place.

CBS Television, which had disavowed the story on Monday night, had by Tuesday night joined all the other networks in covering it. "The most important thing is that the story has legs," said Mark Shields, a political commentator, on the Public Television Service. The sole holdout was *The Wall Street Journal*, normally one of Mr Clinton's sternest critics. It was attacking the White House on a second front with its investigation of the Clintons' past business dealings with James McDougal, a bankrupt Arkansas building society owner who lent him campaign money.

The American media became aware, and was somewhat chastened, by its power during the 1984 presidential election campaign when it exposed Gary Hart's sexual escapades and drove him from the race. Ever since it has agonised over how far it can legitimately probe into a politician's private life, and these allegations have thrown that debate into stark relief.

If the allegations are true, they raise serious questions about Mr Clinton's character, integrity and fitness to be President — particularly as he supposedly continued seeing one woman after his election. They suggest that he may have

improperly used his position as President to try to suppress the allegations, and on a more prosaic level that he abused a range of state-financed perks from cars and telephones to his security detail.

That was the pretext used by *The Washington Post*, in a remarkable display of public hand-wringing, to justify its extensive coverage. "Extra-marital affairs is not the subject of our reporting," said Leonard Downie, its executive editor. "The subject of our reporting is the question of whether or not Bill Clinton, as Governor and now as President, has in any way used government resources and power in any connection with his private life that would be improper."

But the real question that editors have been grappling with is how much credibility to give the allegations, the like of which have never before been levelled against a sitting President. On the one hand they are detailed, and are being made by state troopers who for years spent most of their waking hours with Mr Clinton during the 1980s. Two have spoken on-the-record

and signed sworn affidavits to buttress their claims. Now besieged by reporters in Little Rock, they say they did not come forward earlier because they did not believe Mr Clinton would be elected and wanted to keep their jobs in Arkansas.

They are the more plausible because Mr Clinton himself admitted during last year's election campaign that he had caused "pain" in his marriage. However, he denied an affair with Jennifer Flowers, the Arkansas nightclub singer who was among the women the troopers named.

On the other hand, the troopers have acknowledged plans to write a book which would presumably make them rich men. They have put themselves in the hands of Cliff Jackson, an Arkansas lawyer with a record of enmity towards Mr Clinton. The allegations first appeared in the *American Spectator*, a conservative magazine that has also delighted in denigrating Mr Clinton.

With the exception of Mrs Clinton's remarks on Tuesday, the White House response has been to batten down the hatches and hope the storm blows over. It has given none of its regular daily briefings this week, and until yesterday kept Mr Clinton largely out of range of reporters' questions.

Officials are telling journalists that the public was well aware of Mr Clinton's lapses when they voted him into office and will ignore these new allegations. They suggest that they are more concerned about the controversy over the Clintons' past business dealings. The fact remains that the Clintons have been dramatically deprived of what they expected to be a cheerful and triumphant end to their first year in office.



McDougal: deals with President questioned

The Clinton affair, page 1  
Clinton's at home, page 12  
William Rees-Mogg, page 14



The President and the First Lady, who have been deprived of a triumphant finish to their first year in office

## Teacher jailed for raping pupils

Nanterre: A French primary school teacher has been sentenced to 15 years in jail for raping six pupils aged six.

Guy Provoux, 57, raped five girls and one boy during 1985-86, but for years the victims were too scared to report him. The children told the court that Provoux had threatened to kill their parents with a pistol kept in his desk at the Malakoff primary school in Nanterre, northwest of Paris, if they told anyone about the attacks.

According to testimony, Provoux was known to be an alcoholic, but he was allowed to keep his teaching job even though his superiors were aware of the problem. (AP)

## General sued

Iagos: Gani Fawehinmi, a civil liberties lawyer, has taken General Sani Abacha, Nigeria's military ruler, and Olu Onagoruwa, the Justice Minister, to court over ten decrees banning legal challenges to them, newspapers have reported here. (Reuters)

## UN troops stay

New York: Jonathan Howe, the chief United Nations envoy in Somalia, has said he expects UN troops to stay until March 1995. The Security Council hopes that at least 18,000 troops will remain after six countries withdraw their contingents soon. (Reuters)

## Iranians killed

Sofia: Two Iranians wanted on suspicion of murdering a policeman during a drugs raid, were killed in a gun battle with police here, a Bulgarian Interior Ministry official said. The shooting of the two men ended a two-week manhunt. (AP)

## Violent kidnap

São Paulo: Decio Moraes Ribeiro, one of Brazil's leading coffee growers, was kidnapped from his car 120 miles from here. Police believe he was beaten as he struggled with his kidnappers. It was the second abduction in his family in three years. (Reuters)

## Policeman shot

Ankara: The head of Ankara's police anti-terror unit was shot and badly wounded by a guard protesting about a demolition. Burhan Tansu was shot four times in the abdomen during an argument with Arif Dogan, who has been arrested. (Reuters)

## TV chief jailed

Seoul: A criminal court sentenced Masato Shinohara, the Japanese bureau chief of Japan's Fuji Television Company here, to two years in prison for passing military secrets to the Japanese Embassy in Seoul between 1989 and 1992. (Reuters)

## Access granted

Milan: Papal authorities have for the first time given Italy's anti-corruption investigators access to the accounts of the Vatican's bank, which allegedly provided a conduit for \$36 million in bribes to politicians. (AFP)

## Football death

Pavia: An unemployed football fan, 19, committed suicide after being banned from the local stadium for one year for his alleged role in a brawl. Italian police said. He left a note saying he could not "stand a year without soccer". (Reuters)

## Two Israelis killed as peace formula eludes negotiators

BY RICHARD BEESTON

ISRAELI and Palestinian negotiators edged towards a compromise on the second day of their talks outside Paris yesterday aimed at saving their stalled peace deal.

However, there was no sign of an imminent breakthrough on the main outstanding issues of security and sovereignty, and militant Palestinians took advantage of the deadlock to resume their campaign of violence in the occupied territories, where two Israelis were killed in an ambush.

Reports in Israel suggested that the Israeli and PLO officials, meeting in Versailles, were still stuck on the question of who will control the border crossings between the Gaza Strip and Egypt, and the West Bank town of Jericho and Jordan, once Israeli forces have withdrawn from the area.

Israeli officials have told the PLO that Israel is prepared to conduct "joint patrols" with the Palestinian security officers along the borders, but they have insisted on having ultimate control of who and what is allowed to enter the Palestinian autonomous areas. The issue seemed unlikely

**■ Israel and the PLO still cannot reach agreement on security and sovereignty. Opponents are taking advantage of the stalemate to wreck the treaty**

to be resolved during this round of dialogue, and it looked certain that another meeting between Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, to complete details of the peace accord would not now take place before the new year.

Nissim Zivli, the Secretary-General of Israel's ruling Labour Party, who met Mr Arafat in Tunis on Tuesday night, said that part of the problem in the current negotiations was the PLO chief's negotiating style, which he likened to haggling "as if he was in a souk (a Muslim market)".

The visiting Israeli politician apparently spelt out Mr Rabin's position that Israeli control of borders was set out in the joint declaration of principles signed over three months ago and was non-negotiable. "The sooner Arafat understands that, the better it will be for everyone," he said

in an interview with the French daily *Libération*, yesterday. The delay apparently gave encouragement to the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, which carried out yesterday's drive-by shooting in the West Bank village of Beituniya, where gunmen sprayed 50 rounds of automatic fire into an Israeli car, killing two orthodox Jews.

Jewish settlers vowed last night to mount simultaneous demonstrations across Israel and the occupied territories to protest at the deaths and block traffic to Arab vehicles.

"Again we see that this peace isn't peace. It is costing more victims," said Moshe Nissim, a member of the main right-wing opposition Likud Party which has accused the Government of failing to protect Jewish settlers.

Since the peace agreement was signed between Israel and the PLO on September 13, 16 Israelis and 45 Palestin-

ians have been killed in violence on both sides. The last attack against Israelis in the occupied territories occurred in the West Bank town of Hebron a week ago. It is believed that Hamas suspended its operations for fear of jeopardising the repatriation of its supporters among the last of the deportees from southern Lebanon.

Even before the latest attack by Arab militants, Jewish settlers in the occupied territories had signalled their intention to step up their campaign to undermine the peace process. The leaders of the settlers unveiled their plans yesterday to establish satellite settlements beside the existing 130 Jewish communities in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights.

"If there are 130 settlements now and they are giving the Government problems, the way to double the problems and bring the peace process to a complete halt is to double the settlements," Shmuel Sacketz, a resident of the settlement of Givat Shimon, on the West Bank, said.

"We want to stall the negotiations," he added. "We are for peace, but do not accept this peace plan."

## Season of ill will casts its pall over town of Christ

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN BETHLEHEM

If Christmas purists in the West bemoan the commercialisation of their favourite holiday, then they should spare a thought for the luckless inhabitants of Christ's birthplace.

Bethlehem's problems do not stem from the low-key decorations outside the town's souvenir shops, where cheap olive-wood carvings, T-shirts and Palestinian headscarves are about all there is for sale. Instead, the tradition in this West Bank town just south of Jerusalem is that every political force in the region likes to make its presence felt at the one time of year when it is assured an international audience.

Although the prospects for a happy Christmas in Bethlehem started off well when Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation signed their peace agreement, and the Palestinians lifted a six-year self-imposed ban on festivities, recently a more familiar and depressing pattern has emerged. The first sign that there could be problems ahead occurred

when the Israeli authorities prevented the Norwegian government, which mediated the Middle East peace deal, from donating a Christmas tree to Bethlehem, citing fears that it could be diseased.

The slight to Bethlehem's honour did not go unanswered. Elias Freij, the town's mayor, made his own statement by raising a Palestinian flag from his municipal offices, just across Manger Square from the main Israeli police station.

The Israelis told him to take it down, raising the prospects of a test of wills between Palestinian nationalism and Israeli military might, which could yet derail the Christmas celebrations. Not to be left out of the picture, militant Palestinian groups opposed to the peace process decided to make their mark as well. First Fa'iah Uprising, a splinter group in Damascus headed by Abu Musa, issued a statement this week warning that pilgrims to the region would not be safe from attack. Then

the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, called a strike for no better reason than to intimidate local shopkeepers.

Even the religious authorities are not averse to using the occasion for political posturing. Michel Sabbah, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who this week demanded that Israel release an imprisoned militant guerrilla leader, has hinted that he intends to use his Midnight Mass sermon in the Church of the Nativity to press Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, for progress in their talks.

The result is that the air of gloom which has come to characterise Bethlehem over the past few years will probably be faithfully reproduced on Christmas Eve. The Israeli military will put into effect its massive security operation, the locals will decide to give Midnight Mass another miss and foreign visitors, treated more like England football fans than pilgrims, will wonder why they bothered coming.

مكتبة الأصل





President de Klerk, left, and two of his Cabinet, Adriaan Vlok, centre, and Kobie Coetsee, all smiles at the final parliamentary session

## Wind of change sweeps away Pretoria's white parliament

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN  
IN JOHANNESBURG

THE South African parliament yesterday voted itself out of existence in the country's most dramatic constitutional change since the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910.

With the tricameral parliament will now disappear the entire organisational, legislative and administrative underpinning for apartheid, the grotesque racial policy of "separate development" that was written into law after the election to power of the National Party government in 1948.

Just before the vote was taken the Conservative MPs and a staunch group of supporters in the public gallery stood to attention and sang the national anthem, *Die Stem (The Call)*. The most senior of the hardline white supremacists, Feroz Poonjee, the leader of the Conservative Party, said a monster was being created. "It is a transition to communism," he said.

A young white who yelled "You are busy with treason" was removed from the gallery after the singing. Meanwhile MPs belonging to the African National Congress and its alliance partners stood with clenched fists and cried: "Amandla awethu!" — "Power is ours!"

The vote was passed by 236 for

■ The vote to abolish the structure that upheld decades of apartheid provoked suitably divided reactions. Some sang songs of protest and accused the politicians of treason while others wore silly hats to mark the occasion

abolition to 46 against. Earlier Dr Hartzberg, with his ginger moustache quivering, compared the end of the apartheid parliament to May 31, 1902, when the "bitter-enders" among the badly beaten Boer leaders finally admitted defeat and yielded to the might of the British war machine. Speaking at the official closure of the present session of parliament, Dr Hartzberg insisted that the disappearance of the all-white House of Assembly meant a loss of freedom for the Afrikaners. "There will again be a House of Assembly for our people," he said.

However, the country's black population welcomed the new constitution. Nelson Mandela, president of the African National Congress, in his Christmas message to the nation, saw the promise of a brighter tomorrow. "This will be the last Christmas we observe under white minority rule," he said. "We start 1994 with vigour, for it is our year of freedom."

After the parliamentary session ended MPs had an official "team photograph" taken. Two members, both called van der Merwe, wore silly hats. Queen Victoria, whose statue stands implacably unaffected in the parliament's grounds, was unaffected even by a 60mph example of the howling wind that regularly afflicts Cape Town at Christmas. People hung to lamp-posts to prevent themselves being dashed beneath the traffic and ports were left deserted.

The decision to press ahead with passing the new constitution into law was taken despite the fact that negotiations with five political groups who have still not accepted the transition to majority rule have not ended. It is still possible that the constitution may yet have to be changed before it comes into effect with the holding of the country's first non-racial, fully democratic general election on April 27.

A late-night compromise between the ANC and the Government on one side, and the Freedom Alliance in which the

five groups of white right-wingers and Conservative black homeland leaders are linked on the other, yesterday set a new deadline for completion of the negotiations. January 24 has now been set as the last date on which the multi-party negotiating council could meet to endorse an agreement with the alliance.

It seems, however, that like a work of art, a constitution is never actually completed: work on it just stops. It is suggested that if the negotiators need even more time a multi-party accord should be drawn up, which bind the new government, that the agreed amendments would be made after the election. This would at least mean that parliament would not have to be recalled for a final session before the election.

The new compromise which led to hopes that the talking would continue, came after the ANC and the Government softened the demand that the alliance accept the negotiation result, the transition and the election, sight unseen. Now the alliance leaders must agree that if a political deal is made they will commit themselves to the result, the transitional structures and the election. If they do that, said the weary negotiators, talks on substantive issues could begin right away.

Leading article, page 15

## Cambodian hope of survival rides on King's health

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PHNOM PENH

PORTRAITS of a suave, black-haired King Sihanouk in the prime of life have recently been replaced on public buildings here by pictures of an older, grey-haired figure. While the earlier pictures flattered the monarch, 71, who resumed the throne of Cambodia in September, the new painted portraits, which seem to stress his mortality, hardly seem to do him justice.

Yet the state of health of King Sihanouk, the only figure revered by all sides in Cambodia, and the key to peace and stability in a country now enjoying a tenuous peace after 13 years of bloody civil war, is a subject of worried speculation in the Cambodian capital.

The King, who re-ascended the throne again after 38 years soon after the successful UN-sponsored elections, is under-

going chemotherapy in Peking for a tumour near his prostate gland. He said last month: "My death is foreseeable."

The matter is of as much concern to the Khmer Rouge, which remains outside the mainstream of political life here but seems to want to join the Government without giving up any of the area it controls, as to its adversaries, a coalition of royalist and former Marxist parties which were elected in the elections last May. "Sihanouk is the only one the Khmer Rouge listens to," an envoy here said.

Though often viewed as exasperating by foreign governments, the King is regarded as the only national figure who can bring together Cambodia's former warring factions, diplomats say. He is seen as above the fray.

"Given the fragility of Cambodia's situation, it would be a catastrophe if the King were not to survive," noted another Western envoy. "I dread to think what would happen."

The latest word about the King's health came from Princess Bopha Devi, the king's favourite daughter, who has just returned from seeing her father in Peking. "He seemed very strong," she told relieved foreign envoys at a diplomatic reception here.

□ Khmer talks: Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the Prime Minister, has held secret talks in Bangkok with Khieu Samphan, of the Khmer Rouge, to discuss a possible role for the rebels in the Government, government officials reported. (Reuters)



Sihanouk: stays above the political fray

## New York offers poor token relief

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

Christmas shoppers in New York now have a new way of bringing a little seasonal cheer to the growing troop of beggars on the city's streets — giving them special food vouchers instead of small change.

A community group has persuaded 17 shops on Manhattan's Upper West Side to sell the 25-cent vouchers to their customers. The beggars can then redeem the vouchers at face value for food and toiletries — but not alcohol or drugs — at six local supermarkets and a bagel shop.

The West Side Cares group says the scheme will help to "stop feeding the drug dealers and start feeding people in need". But it has already been criticised by some groups who work with the homeless.

The voucher idea was pioneered in the university town of Berkeley, outside San Francisco, which has sold 250,000 coupons over the last two years. But with Americans increasingly concerned about their quality of life because of increasing crime and homelessness, a number of other cities such as New Haven, Connecticut, and Portland

in Washington state have also experimented with the voucher approach.

The results have prompted a reassessment of the needs of beggars. Although about 70 per cent of Berkeley's vouchers were redeemed for food and other goods, in Portland only 13 per cent are used, convincing some that most panhandlers only really want drugs and alcohol.

Some critics say the voucher schemes merely serve to help Christmas scrooges to assuage their guilty consciences by giving a pittance to those in need, and argue that the programmes are no substitute for effective social policy.

They predict that the vouchers will be traded for cash on the black market, just as government-issued "food stamps" are sold by welfare recipients who want money to buy drugs. The New York scheme targets the area around Columbia University, which is sandwiched between the wealthy Upper West Side and the slums of Harlem. More than 100 vouchers were redeemed in the first few days.

# Proposed changes to Child Support Maintenance.

The Government has announced its intention to make changes to the regulations on child support maintenance. These changes will be laid before Parliament shortly, and are subject to approval.

The regulations will:

- make changes to the formula used to assess child support maintenance, and
- extend the arrangements for phasing in the way maintenance payments are made by some absent parents.

### CHANGES TO THE FORMULA

The proposed changes to the formula will start in February 1994. People with existing child support maintenance assessments should not do anything about these changes — in February they will automatically have their maintenance re-assessed.

All new child support maintenance assessments made after February 1994 will take account of the changes.

There is no need to contact the Child Support Agency.

### NEW PHASING OF MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS

The proposed changes to phasing may affect those absent parents who:

- had an existing maintenance agreement prior to 5 April 1993, and
- currently support a second family.

The proposed new phasing arrangements will also start early in February 1994. The Child Support Agency will contact those people who may be affected.

There is no need to contact the Child Support Agency.

If you would like further information, please fill in the coupon and send to: CS Changes, FREEPOST 1399, Slough SL1 4BU (no stamp needed).

CS Changes, FREEPOST 1399, Slough SL1 4BU. (IN BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE.)

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms):

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Postcode:

If you are acting on behalf of an organisation, please tick the box. ☐



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Exclusive: the American Spectator article which is rocking the presidency

# At home with the Clintons

State troopers tell of a wife with a 'garbage mouth', a boss with a string of mistresses and how they kept a 'Hillary watch' as Clinton sated a gargantuan sexual appetite in cars and hotels.

David Brock reports from Little Rock

In a remarkable but little-noticed article buried inside the Sunday Washington Post four months before the 1992 presidential election, Betsey Wright, a top Clinton campaign aide, said she had been spending the better part of her time since the Democratic National Convention trying to quell potential "bimbo eruptions".

Through the Little Rock gossip mills, the campaign was tracking 19 potential allegations that had surfaced in the first week following the convention, in addition to seven others that had appeared earlier in the year. The extensive effort to short-circuit such stories, Ms Wright said, included the campaign's hiring of a private investigator to obtain information damaging to the credibility of the women involved.

Ms Wright was not the first to talk about the campaign's aggressive efforts to discredit sources and lobby reporters and editors to spike emerging news stories. Even the recently released documentary about the 1992 campaign, *The War Room*, showed George Stephanopoulos on the telephone on the eve of the election, warning a caller not to go public with damaging information about Clinton's private life.

The campaign had gone on "full alert" when Jennifer Flowers, the former cabaret singer, alleged in an interview with the *Star* supermarket tabloid that she had carried on a 12-year affair with Clinton ("Mistress Tells All: The Secret Love Tapes That Prove It"). With Hillary at his side, Clinton appeared on *60 Minutes* to deny that he had ever had an affair with Flowers, calling her only "a friendly acquaintance", but acknowledging unspecified "wrongdoing" and "causing pain in my marriage". (Clinton never contested the authenticity of the tapes; in fact he apologised to Mario Cuomo for a remark imputing Mafia ties to the New York Governor.)

On the Flowers tapes, Clinton is heard saying, "They can't run a story like this unless somebody said, 'Yeah, I did it with him.'" But aside from the women, there was another group of sources sought after by reporters in the autumn of 1992 because they were uniquely positioned to have first-hand knowledge of the subject: the dozen or so Arkansas state police officers assigned to the governor's security detail both before and during the presidential run.

Under state law, these troopers are charged with safeguarding the first family of Arkansas. In practice, at least during the six terms that Clinton held office, the troopers functioned as chauffeurs, butlers, bodyguards, errand boys, and baggage handlers. They did everything for the Clintons, from receiving and placing telephone calls to changing bicycle tyres and cleaning up after Socks the cat (who apparently reaches with alarming frequency).

I spent more than 30 hours interviewing four state troopers who had worked for the Clintons at various times over the years; in total, their experience covered most of the period from early 1979, when Clinton first took office, to January 16, 1993, when Clinton left Little Rock and flew east for his presidential inauguration.

Ultimately, two of the troopers, Larry Patterson and Roger Perry, decided to go on the record with

the material and allow their names to be used in this piece. They say they are moved to public-spiritedness. But as with all sources, there is also an element of self-interest and score-settling in their decision to speak to the media. As the troopers see it, Clinton behaved ungratefully and even rudely toward them after election day. "We lied for him and helped him cheat on his wife and he treated us like dogs," Patterson said. When one of the troopers asked Clinton to sign some photographs for his family after the election, he said the President-elect snapped: "I don't have time for that s---."

The experiences of Patterson and Perry show that, in addition to lying to the American public when he denied his relationship with Jennifer Flowers and claiming that any infidelity had occurred only earlier in his marriage, Clinton had an elaborate damage-control operation and for a very good reason: for at least a decade, Clinton has been prone to extramarital affairs, often more than one at a time, and to numerous one-night stands. According to the troopers, the clandestine sexual encounters occurred even after the presidential election and continued through Clinton's final days in Little Rock.

Clinton is a man of gargantuan appetites and enormous drive, and not only in relation to women. "When he would eat an apple," said Roger Perry, a stout 6ft 2in chain-smoker who does not seem easily offended, "he would eat the whole thing, core, stem, and seeds. He would pick up a baked potato with his hands and eat it in two bites. I've never seen anything like it."

The troopers said their "official" duties included facilitating Clinton's cheating on his wife. This meant that, on the state payroll and using state time, vehicles and resources, they were instructed by Clinton on a regular basis to approach women and to solicit their telephone numbers for the governor, to drive him in state vehicles to rendezvous points, to guard him during sexual encounters, to secure hotel rooms and other meeting places for sex, to lend Clinton their state cars so he could slip away and visit women, and to help Clinton cover up his activities by keeping tabs on Hillary's whereabouts and lying to his wife about her husband's whereabouts.

While rumours of extramarital dalliances have surrounded many presidents in this century, the scale of Clinton's past indiscretions, if it has been sustained in the White House, as has been widely rumoured, would appear to far exceed that of any of his predecessors, with the possible exception of John Kennedy.

As the troopers saw it, the Clintons' relationship is an effective political partnership, more a business relationship than a marriage. They described Bill as the public face, the communicator, the conciliator, a man who likes to be liked and even talked with them about his "star" qualities. "One time we got to talking while I was driving him back from a political event and he said, 'You know, I'm going to have to stay in politics now, because I'm too old to be a movie star,'" Patterson recalled.

During his 12 years as governor, Clinton had a full household staff, including several cooks and a babysitter on the premises paid for



by the state, not to mention several inmates from Arkansas prisons who worked *gratis* as gardeners and handymen on the grounds. (They were also made to provide free labour on the Little Rock home of the Rodhams, Hillary's parents.) The Clintons owned no property, and the state rented Bill the Lincoln town car in which he was driven. Throughout his tenure, Clinton was careful to fly coach-class into and out of Little Rock; but during the rest of his itinerary, he insisted on flying first-class.

The troopers were closer to Bill than to Hillary Clinton, who in their revelations comes off as unfavourably one-dimensional. The troopers chauffeured Clinton on a daily basis and were privy to his every move. Hillary, on the other hand, kept her distance, preferring to speak through Bill or some other third party, possibly because she disdained their role in facilitating his philandering.

From their direct observations Patterson and Perry said that they believe that Hillary is more obsessed than Bill with his political fortunes. She expressed this concern as she did almost everything in language that makes the Watergate tapes sound like a Sunday school lesson. "I remember one time when Bill had been quoted in the morning paper saying something she didn't like," Patterson said. "I came into the mansion and he was standing at the top of the stairs and she was standing at the bottom screaming. She has a garbage mouth on her. I went into the kitchen and the cook, Miss Emma, turned to me and said 'The devil's in that woman!'."

"She hated Arkansas. She would always say how 'backward' the state was," Perry said. One trooper told Perry that Hillary forbade him to speak when he accompanied her on a trip to Washington because, as she put it, he "sounded like a hick from Arkansas."

Over the years, the troopers claim to have seen Bill Clinton in compromising situations with dozens of women. They alleged their assistance in the activities ranged from wiping make-up off his shirt collar, to standing "Hillary watch"

while Clinton cavorted, to arranging sex sessions in hotel rooms and parking lots, to sneaking women into the governor's mansion while Hillary and Chelsea slept. As the troopers described the situation, the scale of Clinton's extramarital activities increased after he won election to a second term in 1982. When Perry returned to security duty at the mansion in the late 1980s, other troopers regaled him with tales of Clinton's affairs in the 1982-1987 period. During the last five years of Clinton's governorship, while Patterson worked at the residence, he said he gained first-hand knowledge that Clinton was involved with a group of Little Rock women — regular mistresses or girlfriends — numbering about half a dozen.

According to Patterson, the long-term mistresses since 1987, in addition to Jennifer Flowers, included a staffer in Clinton's office, an Arkansas lawyer Clinton appointed to a judgeship, the wife of a prominent judge, a local reporter, an employee at Arkansas Power and Light, and a cosmetics sales clerk at a Little Rock department store. They ranged in age from their early 30s to their early 40s. According to both Patterson and Perry, throughout the period of their employment at the governor's residence, Clinton visited one of these women, either in the early morning or the late evening, or one of them came to the residence to see him, at least two or three times a week.

Clinton also had a series of brief affairs and one-time encounters from 1987 through early 1993 of which the troopers had direct knowledge. He often met women at social functions in Little Rock or on the road. Sometimes he would even use troopers as intermediaries, sending them off with messages and outright propositions to women to retire to back rooms, hotel rooms, or offices with him.

One of the troopers told the story of how Clinton had eyed a woman

at a reception at the Excelsior Hotel in downtown Little Rock. According to the trooper, who told the story to both Patterson and Perry as well, Clinton asked him to approach the woman, whom the trooper remembered only as Paula, tell her how attractive the governor thought she was, and take her to a room in the hotel where Clinton would be waiting. As the troopers explained it, the standard procedure in a case like this was for one of them to inform the hotel that the governor needed a room for a short time because he was expecting an important call from the White House. (Not a terribly plausible story during the Reagan and Bush years, but it seemed to work like a charm with hotel clerks in Arkansas.)

Patterson — tall and trim, with the upright demeanour and close-cropped hair of a military officer — recalled another example he witnessed late in the evening on the night after Clinton's disastrous speech to the 1988 Democratic convention. "Norman Lear gave us a suite of offices in a building next to the CNN building where the governor and his staff were working. Sandy Berger (a long-time Clinton adviser and now deputy national security adviser) had flown in to write the speech. The day after, Clinton spent the day 'spinning' the press. Well, that night, when we finished, we went back to the offices around midnight and a young lady of about 30 or 32 (name withheld), whom the governor had just met at the convention, was there to meet us. He took her back in a private office, closed the door, and stayed in there for an hour or so while I waited to take him back to the Marriott where he and Hillary were staying."

According to the troopers, Clinton often visited his regular Little Rock girlfriends in the early morning, during what were ostensibly long jogs. "He would jog out of the mansion grounds very early most

mornings and then we would go pick him up at a McDonald's at 7th Street and Broadway," Patterson said. "When we picked him up, half the time he would be covered in sweat and the other half of the time there wouldn't be a drop of sweat on him, even in the middle of July in Little Rock. Sometimes I'd ask him, 'How far did you run today governor?' And he would say, 'Five miles.' I'd tell him there must be something wrong with his sweat glands because he didn't have a drop of sweat on him. He'd say, 'I can't fool you guys, can I?'"

As the troopers recounted events, several times a month in the late evening, Clinton would leave the residence in a state car borrowed from one of the troopers. "We were told to keep our cars clean for this purpose," said Perry. A few minutes after the lights clicked off in bedroom, Clinton would get out of bed and "go out for a drive", leaving instructions at the guard house that if Hillary woke up, he was to be alerted on his cellular phone. On more than a dozen occasions since 1987, Patterson said he saw one of the troopers' cars parked outside one particular girlfriend's apartment as he drove home after being relieved from his shift at the mansion at midnight. The woman lived just a few doors from Patterson on Shadow Oaks in Sherwood, on the outskirts of Little Rock.

The troopers also drove Clinton late in the evening to various women's homes and waited for hours for him to emerge. They became expert at parking unobtrusively, by backing into driveways and the like. Patterson recalled that the first time he parked in this manner outside the home of the Clinton staffer in 1987, where he sat from midnight until about 4.30am waiting on the governor, Clinton congratulated him on his stealthiness. "He told me it was our responsibility to cover his ass so he wouldn't get in trouble," Patterson said.

By all accounts, whenever Clinton returned to the residence after one of these encounters, he went to the bathroom in the troopers' guard house, where he washed up before entering the main house. During the day, when Hillary was in town but not at home, and Clinton wanted privacy in the residence with a woman, the troopers said, they were instructed to buzz him on the intercom as soon as Hillary's car approached the front gate of the compound. When Hillary was out of town, the troopers remembered innumerable occasions when Bill would not hesitate to seize the opportunity to entertain women at all hours of the day and night, clearing them through the gates for what the troopers said he called a "personal tour of the mansion".

After the presidential election, Clinton instructed the troopers to clear women through the outer Secret Service blockade on the street by falsely identifying them as staff, or as cousins of the troopers. Shortly before the Clintons left Little Rock for Washington, Perry said one of the troopers told him that he had arranged for one woman to arrive at the governor's mansion at 5.15am, dressed in a trench coat and a baseball cap at Clinton's instruction. The trooper told Perry he had told the Secret Service that she was "staff coming in very early". Clinton had arranged for the trooper to bring the woman through a basement door, which opened into a games room, where Clinton was waiting. According to Perry, the trooper said he was instructed to stand at the top of the stairs and to alert Clinton if Hillary woke up.

Over time, each mistress was assigned a particular trooper whose job it was to call her and find out when she could see Bill at

her home, drive her to various events where Bill was appearing, and deliver gifts to her. When speaking to the troopers about these liaisons, Clinton was usually quite circumspect, but on some occasions he inexplicably permitted himself to be caught in *flagrante delicto*. More than once, Patterson said, he stood guard and witnessed the department store clerk performing oral sex on Bill in a parked car, including in the parking lot of Chelsea's elementary school, and on the grounds of the governor's mansion. "Later he told me that he had researched the subject in the Bible and oral sex isn't considered adultery."

Hillary apparently was aware of Bill's hanky-panky, at least in general terms. Patterson recalled one Sunday afternoon in the late 1980s when he heard Hillary complain to Bill in highly colourful language about their inadequate sex life. "Even though she knew what was going on, he would hide it because he didn't want the confrontation," Perry said. Clinton did get caught every once in a while. Generally a heavy sleeper, Hillary once woke up in the middle of the night, flicked on the bedroom light, and called down to the guard house looking for Bill. "The sorry damn son of a bitch!" she exclaimed when told the governor had gone out for a drive. Perry grabbed the cellular phone and told him to get back to the residence fast. "He started saying 'Oh god, god, god. What did you tell her?'" Perry recalled. When Clinton arrived soon after, Hillary was waiting in the kitchen where, not unexpectedly, a wild screaming match ensued. When Perry entered the kitchen after the dust had settled, the room was a wreck, with a cabinet door kicked off its hinges.

Another fight ensued on the Clintons' final day in Little Rock, according to Patterson. Clinton asked him to bring one of his women

friends to the send-off ceremony at the airport before he departed for Washington. "When I got there with [the judge's wife], Hillary turned to me and said, 'What the f--- do you think you're doing? I know who that whore is. I know what she's doing here. Get her out of here.'" Clinton was standing right there. I looked at him and he just shrugged his shoulders, so I took her out of there and dropped her at the Holiday Inn Center City."

According to Perry, Clinton told him in 1990 that he was considering not running for re-election in Arkansas because he feared his history of womanising would be exposed. As it happened, during that year's campaign, Larry Nichols, a disgruntled former state employee, filed a lawsuit linking Clinton to five named women and making the unsubstantiated charge that he had been fired as part of an attempted cover-up involving a secret fund used to facilitate Clinton's trysts. The suit was reported in Arkansas, but neither the precise nature of the allegations nor the women's names were mentioned.

On the Flowers tapes, after telling Flowers "if they ever hit you with it just say 'no' and go on", Clinton had said he would be free and clear on the womanising issue so long as "they don't have pictures". In a conversation in the kitchen of the governor's mansion after Flowers went public, Clinton asked one of the troopers for advice on how to handle the situation. Clinton said that without photos, nothing could be proved. "I told him, 'Then lie your ass off,'" the trooper said, and Clinton apparently did.

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'She knew what was going on, but he would still hide it'

That Clinton woman has got the Devil in her'



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Family ti

BOSNIAN REFUGEE APPEAL

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## The infectious truth about the first Christmas . . . mechanical pain relief . . . secrets of low cholesterol

## Family ties

THE Bishop of Durham may have his doubts about the nativity, but for most church people it is a tenet of their faith. Whatever the theologians think about the cowshed as labour ward, doctors can be united in their certainty that the infant Christ survived a most unhealthy environment as he entered the world.

The pool of infection, viral and bacterial, increases when there is mass migration, as at the first Christmas, but Mary and her infant would have had to contend with a host of animal-borne diseases ranging from listeria to tetanus, as well as the hazards of infection from the crowds milling about the over-booked inn.



MEDICAL BRIEFING  
Dr Thomas Stuttford

The Christmas edition of the *British Medical Journal* does not probe the microbiology of the cowshed but does obliquely question the standards of hygiene of the British labour ward, where the strict discipline of the operating theatre is not observed.

In particular, the *BMJ* concentrates on the bacterial contamination of the obstetrician's tie. Jesus's immune system may well have had to contend with the stable cat's toxoplasmosis, but at least he did not have a tie laden with enterococcus faecalis and staphylococci waving in his face.

Research workers from Liverpool University, led by Charles Kingsland, a consultant gynaecologist, and Professor Charles Hart, professor of medical biology, have studied the bacteria growing on the ties of 15 senior hospital obstetricians working at hospitals in the Midlands, Wales and north-



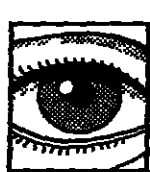
Tied down: an infection trap

ern England. Broader statistics show that 15 per cent of all doctors do not wear a white coat in the labour ward, and none of the 15 doctors interviewed wore the traditional doctor's tie pin, so useful in preventing the tie falling into the highly contaminated areas gynaecologists examine.

Liverpool workers thought that the danger of the bacteria-laden tie might be overcome if doctors wore a bow tie, and comparative research showed that bow ties become contaminated less quickly than ordinary ties, but by the end of the third day of wearing a tie, there was no difference in the levels of contamination.

As the labouring mother admires her consultant obstetrician's designer tie, she can take some comfort that the Liverpool microbiologists discovered that although bacteria were found on seven out of 12 of their bow ties, and ten out of 12 of the conventional ties after the first day's wear, none of the bacteria were "potentially highly pathogenic": in layman's terms, the bugs on the tie are not very dangerous.

## One in the eye



LAST Christmas, Dr Alexander Macdonald, who practises in Bristol and London, became a patient himself after he dived too enthusiastically into the Christmas tree to retrieve a present and spiked his eye on a pine needle.

Every year casualty officers expect to see a few eyes damaged by holly spikes and needles. Dr Macdonald went to the Bristol eye hospital where he received appropriate first aid treatment, and he was warned that his eye would be so painful for two or three days that work would be impossible.

Dr Macdonald has a particular interest in pain control and with a colleague, Dr Tim Coates, a zoologist, has studied alleviation of pain by electronic means.

Dr Macdonald and Dr Coates have together designed a machine which a small trial has suggested gives considerably greater, and

more prolonged, relief of pain than that obtained by giving electrical impulses by the transectal nerve stimulation system, TENS, which received considerable publicity a few years ago. One of the disadvantages of TENS is that the pain relief is very short-lived.

The Macdonald/Coates machine provides transcutaneous spinal electro-analgesia by supplying quite painless impulses to the skin over two different, appropriate, levels of the spine. These impulses block the sensation of pain which has been carried along the peripheral nerves, and unlike the TENS machine, the effect is prolonged.

Dr Macdonald's Christmas last year was better than casually had anticipated. When returning home, he applied his machine to two points over his neck.

The excruciating pain went immediately, the eye ceased to water, he was able to rejoin the family festivities and he returned to work after the holiday. His machine is now undergoing clinical trials in various units, and scientific testing at Sheffield University.

## Prime cuts

JOHN ARCHER'S organic pork has revolutionised the Ambridge Christmas: nobody is buying Grundy turkey. Even though John Archer's pork must be rich in cholesterol, this has not disturbed the Ambridge residents.

The *British Medical Journal* reports that a Southampton University study has provided another clue into the mystery why many, probably most, people can eat their pork without danger, while a minority readily develop a high level of cholesterol.

Recent laboratory tests on more than 200 53-year-olds, who had their infant weights and measurements carefully recorded, has shown that there is a relationship between being thin at birth and later developing raised cholesterol. Babies with rounded tummies and well-developed livers may in later life be able to eat the Archer pork with impunity, while those with small infant livers may, even in adult life, be less able to break down cholesterol safely.



Cyclists competing in the Tour de France set an example that many sedentary people would do well to follow, even if they bike only as far as the shops. Doctors say that the benefits of exercise are psychological as well as physical

If gold medals were awarded for sitting around and doing very little, the British would have few challengers.

Only three out of ten men and two out of ten women are doing as much exercise as they should, according to the first national fitness survey, published earlier this year. Asked to walk at a moderate speed up a one in twenty slope, a third of men and two thirds of women couldn't manage it without rests. "This is not so good," says Nick Cavill, of the Health Education Authority, with polite understatement.

The fitness study did not include children, but the evidence is that idleness sets in at about the age of 12 or 13. One study showed that over a third of adolescent boys and half of girls did not experience a single ten-minute episode of even moderate physical activity in a three-day period. Girls are significantly more likely to be inactive than boys.

## We are fast becoming a nation of couch potatoes. Nigel Hawkes on the battle to get Britain moving

The Health Department has set up a new working party, under the Health of the Nation initiative, to decide how to get the nation off its bottom. The first job will be to define targets — which might be, for example, increasing the proportion of people who walk at least a mile a day — and then to devise methods of achieving those targets. Those who already quail at Virginia Bottomley telling them not to smoke or eat fat will have to face the prospect of her suggesting in that bedpan voice that they ought to get off the bus a stop earlier and walk.

Al this comes not a minute too soon, says Dr Roger Whitehead, Director of the Medical Research Council's Dunn Nutrition Centre at Cambridge. "The British are

incredibly inactive. Food intake has fallen by a quarter since the early 1970s, but obesity has actually increased. That can only mean that the energy we expend has fallen even faster." The reasons are simple, he suggests: labour-saving machinery, growing use of the car, and less strenuous jobs.

A new method for measuring energy used backs up Dr Whitehead's view. By drinking a glass of water containing two stable isotopes — oxygen-18 and deuterium — and then measuring the amount of these isotopes in the urine, a precise figure can be put on the energy expended. This is possible because while deuterium (a form of hydrogen) is eliminated from the body as water, oxygen-18 disappears both as water and as carbon dioxide, a product of metabolism.

By measuring the amounts of each isotope in the urine and comparing them with the amount ingested, it is possible to calculate the amount of carbon dioxide produced, and hence the energy expended. Dr Andy Cowan, at the Dunn, has used the method to measure energy expenditure in

## Put some action back into your life

groups from British pensioners to lactating mothers in The Gambia. At one extreme lie the Antarctic explorers Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Dr Mike Stroud, who used the method to measure how much energy they used walking across the continent. (They found the urine bottles useful as chessmen to pass the time in their tent.)

The results show that Dr Stroud expended a prodigious 8,000 calories a day, and Sir

Ranulph, a bigger man, even more. This, Dr Stroud points out, is double the energy of riders in the Tour de France. To eat enough to provide this many calories would have meant each man consuming three-quarters of a kilo of butter a day in addition to all the rations they did eat. As it was, they got home a lot thinner than they set out.

The majority of sedentary Britons lie at the other extreme, expending barely any

more calories than are needed to keep their bodies ticking over — known as the basal metabolic rate (BMR). While Dr Stroud and Sir Ranulph were operating at four to five times BMR, and Gambia mothers two times BMR, British women typically clock in at 1.4 times BMR.

The implications are clear. Our energy demands are now so modest that it is almost impossible to eat three meals a day without exceeding them, and putting on weight. "Eating less and less is absolutely unhelpful. We've reached a stage where it's difficult to eat any less, the only answer is to do more," says Dr Whitehead.

In addition, there is a clear link between exercise and longevity. "A lot of evidence over the past 20-30 years has found that inactive people have about double the risk of heart disease," says Mr Cavill. "The difference is roughly the same as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day."

The most recent American data comes from the Institute for Aerobics Research at Dallas, Texas. After studying 40,000 subjects for an average of eight years, scientists there found that unfit people had

two-and-a-half times the risk of early death than fit ones. The benefits are even greater for those who smoke or suffer high blood pressure or high cholesterol levels.

This means that exercise can actually offset other risk factors that may be harder to control. Somebody with two or three risk factors for heart disease but who is physically fit has a 1.7 times smaller risk than an unfit person with no risk factors. Exercise is also protective against low back pain and osteoporosis, and helps to improve mood and self-esteem.

Rushing into it could be a mistake, however. American work published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* shows that heavy exertion can trigger heart attacks. The risk

of an attack in the hour after heavy exertion is increased by more than 100 times in those who do no regular exercise. The risks fall proportionately with the amount of regular exercise done.

What counts is not intensity, but regularity. The secret, Mr Cavill believes, is to get away from the old image of sweat and Elliman's Rub. Exercise doesn't, he says, mean donning Lycra and pumping iron. "What we want is to persuade many people to be active at a moderate level — not sport and gym, but walking, playing with their children in the park, cycling to work."

"The activity has been taken out of our lives. We may feel fantastically busy, but most of the time we're rushing only to get in the car. What people should do is take a purposeful walk, perhaps at lunchtime, or get off the Underground a stop sooner and walk. They say they haven't got time, but that's an excuse."

**4**  
"BLOODY BOSNIA, WINTER 1993" ON CHANNEL 4.

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## Taming the demon drink

Ian Robertson on how to enjoy yourself over the holiday and avoid that hangover

Most of us will drink more alcohol in the next ten days than we normally do. Many will endure the miseries of a hangover sometime between now and the grey dawn of January 3. Maybe we will be better able to cope with the demands of this annual gastric endurance race if we understand a little more about what alcohol does to our bodies.

Contrary to what temperance campaigners have argued, alcohol is no cultural import like tobacco, caffeine or cocaine — it is a drug which has been around as long as the human race has been on two legs. So intimate is our species' connection with alcohol, in fact, that the human liver produces an enzyme — alcohol dehydrogenase — whose only known purpose is to break down alcohol.

But what actually happens to us when we knock back that pre-Christmas dinner glass of champagne? At first, the alcohol drops from mouth to stomach and about 20 per cent goes straight into the bloodstream through the stomach walls. This is what gives a drink its initial "bite", and champagne delivers this bite better than most drinks, because the bubbles transport the alcohol more quickly into the blood. The remaining 80 per cent flows into the small intestine and is absorbed into the bloodstream chemically virtually unchanged.

If you have starved yourself in preparation for Christmas dinner, the alcohol hits your blood more quickly, and in the process can irritate the unprotected stomach wall. Do this too much and you can bring on gastritis, especially if you take aspirin at the same time. Protein-rich foods such as milk, meat or eggs are the best defence against this type of stomach inflammation.

Once into the blood the alcohol circulates and leaves no organ unaffected. The liver gradually breaks it down using its designer enzyme, alcohol dehydrogenase, at the rate of around one glass of wine (or a small measure of spirits) each hour. Gradually the alcohol is converted into acetaldehyde — a poison which is quickly turned into vinegar — acetic acid. The vinegar in turn burns up to water and carbon dioxide to give energy-producing calories.

This poisonous by-product acetaldehyde is one reason why we feel ill with a hangover. Another is the "dry horrors" — dehydration caused by the diuretic effects of alcohol. This is why several large glasses of water before going to sleep will lower the chances of next-day misery.

A third cause of hangovers is the presence of "congeners" in the alcoholic drink. Congeners include colouring and other chemical impurities: the European Union, for instance, permits 27 additives to be included in wines without them being declared on labels, and the more of such congeners there are in your drink the more likely you are to feel ill in the morning. Generally speaking, the darker and sweeter the beverage, the more likely it is to produce a hangover: red wines tend to be worse than white, brandy worse than vodka and so on. Finally, some hangover symptoms are

simply caused by tiredness. Alcohol depresses refreshing sleep — rapid eye movement (REM) sleep — and thus even though you may have slept for the normal length of time, you probably have had very little proper restful sleep.

But the best policy is not to get a hangover in the first place. Here are some tips for keeping your drinking under control during this party season:

● **Keep a tally**  
A lot of people drink more than they should without realising it. This means avoiding top-ups of half-full glasses, counting each drink and estimating the number of units in the large measure of spirits which you have just been poured. One unit equals one glass of wine, a pub measure of spirits or a half pint of beer.

● **Become a connoisseur**  
As your blood alcohol level rises, the capacity to discriminate fine wines, ports and whiskies falls roughly in proportion to your ability to drive a car safely. A fine wine should be savoured, and slow drinking means a lower hangover risk.

● **Drink "spacers"**  
Many drinks are drunk simply because they are there. The social lubricant effects of alcohol are also partly the result of expectations as much as of the chemical properties of the drug. You may not feel any different if you intersperse non-alcoholic "spacers" in between alcoholic drinks at a party.

● **Put down your glass**  
If you hold your drink in your hand at the party, you will drink more quickly than if you put it down on a neighbouring table. Doing this will also lessen the risk of spilling claret over your host's trousers.

● **Ian Robertson is co-author of Let's Drink to Your Health, published by the British Psychological Society, Leicester.**



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Parkinson's Disease Society



## Janet Daley



■ Religious truth, by very nature, cannot be verified. Indeed this is the appeal of metaphysics

Contrary to popular perception, the Right Rev David Jenkins, Bishop of Durham, does believe in God. Or at least he believes that he believes in God. Just what that belief consists of is the mystery. In fact, the word "mystery" is at the heart of the problem about the nature — indeed, the existence — of the Bishop of Durham's belief. And I am not talking here about disputes over the historical details of the Christmas story into which the good bishop has flung himself with such public relations acumen.

Whether Jesus was actually born in a stable in Bethlehem and precisely what the taxation policies of Rome were toward the Jews which may or may not have necessitated the possible journey of Mary and Joseph are genuinely trivial points which should be of interest only to scholars engrossed in the minutiae of biblical history. Anyone educated in Christian theology would be aware of the obvious discrepancies between the Gospels and the academic inaccuracies of the popular account of Christ's birth.

It is what the bishop concludes from those discrepancies and inaccuracies — not his awareness of them — which makes him so remarkable. For instead of seeing (as most of his less controversial colleagues presumably do) that historical veracity is not at the heart of religious belief, he appears to think that it is of the essence. "We have got to make it clear that [the nativity] is symbolic," he says, adding with some urgency: "that it is actually mythical." Symbolic of what? And clear to whom? To the lay churchgoer, the attendee of school nativity plays, the believer and would-be believer in the street? Presumably.

And why is it so important for the populace to be disabused of what the bishop sees — wrongly and patronisingly, I think — as naive trust in the literal truth of the Christmas story? The only reason for this that I can find is that he thinks that religious belief ought to be verifiable, or at least, not falsifiable; that religion has no right to ask anyone to accept any tenet for which there is no evidence, or on which the existing evidence is conflicting. But this, it seems to me, is a sympathetic outsider, precisely what religion is entitled to demand.

If the Bishop of Durham confined his comments to the obvious flaws in the historical New Testament story, his objections would be merely philistine. What is more serious is his application of the same flat-footed misapprehension about the importance of literal proof to all the central doctrines of his own faith: the virgin birth, the resurrection, and the afterlife. All of which together constitute

His idea of scientific veracity is quaintly out of date

not incidental or colourful bits of populist illustration, but the essential structure of what constitutes Christian belief. Which is not to say — as the bishop presumably thinks one would have to — that they are scientifically true.

Something that is not "scientifically true" is not necessarily "false": it may be "not susceptible to scientific explanation". Which is exactly what religion was always assumed to be, long before the coming of modern theologians, who think they are being modern by debunking any belief not based on provable fact. For the greatest irony in all this is that the bishop is attempting to bring Christianity into the 20th century by imposing on it ideas of scientific veracity which are quaintly out of date.

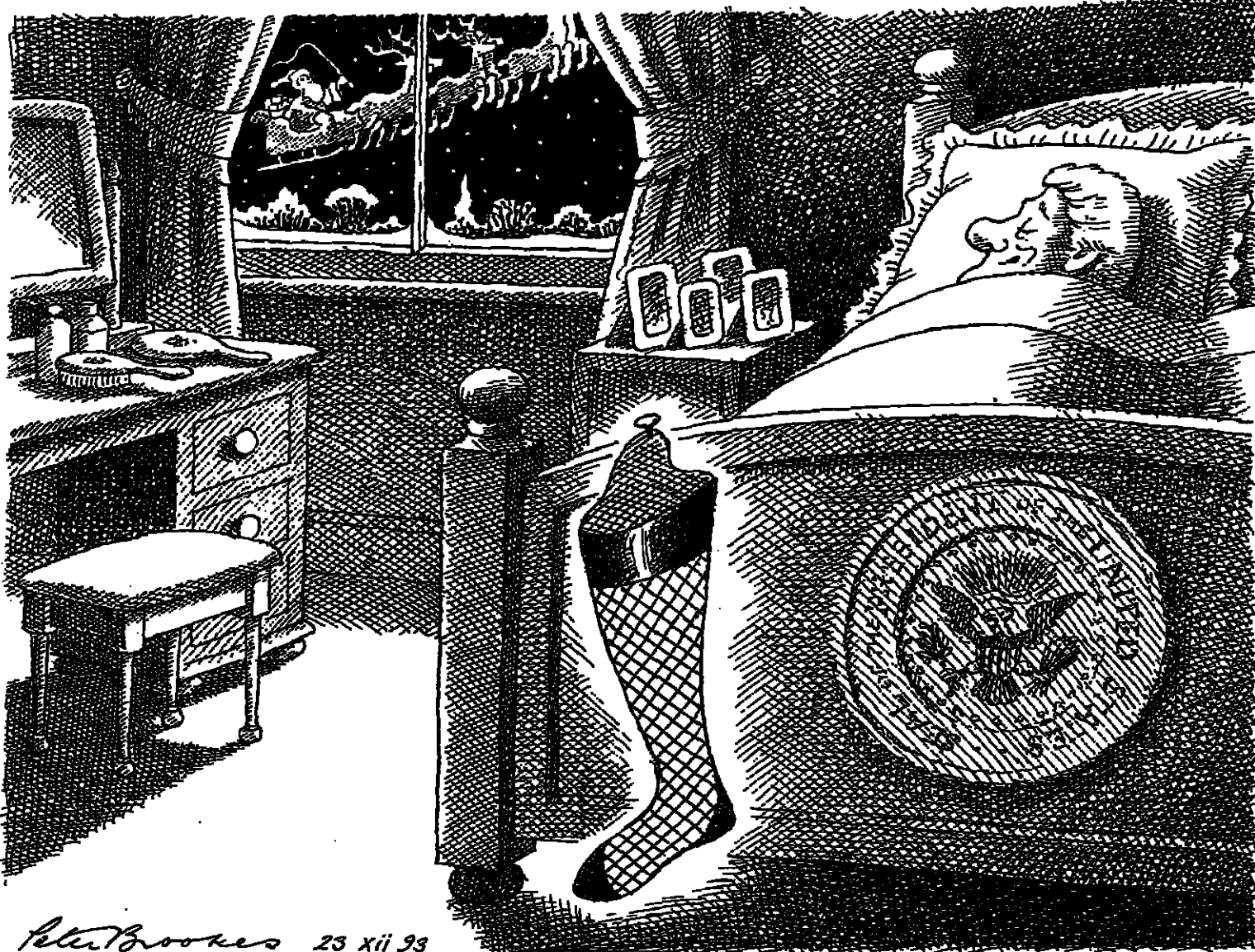
The notion of reality as consisting of indisputable objective facts which can be apprehended in clear-cut, definitive ways has almost entirely disappeared from modern science. Quantum physics actually says that events are altered by being observed: that the world is not composed of neutral "facts", but of a flux which is defined only by our perceptions of it. Which makes a wish to establish the factual basis of religious belief seem not just irrelevant but perverse.

The question that ought to interest any apologist for religion who is troubled by what he thinks of as modern science is this: why is it that virtually every known society has expressed a longing for metaphysical beliefs, a need to construct a cosmic explanation which depicts the human condition as something more than the ticking over of mechanical apparatus? Since there is no biological or evolutionary need for such a system of beliefs, why are they such a universal feature of human existence?

The language in which these beliefs are expressed must always be different from the language of physical reality, because by definition what is aspired to is something that transcends the physical. The distinction between the material world (and its history) and spiritual belief is not a weakness that religion needs to redress: it is what religion is about.

To remove what is mysterious, unverifiable and properly otherworldly from religion is not to modernise it, but to dismantle it utterly: to reduce it to a purely intellectual argument requiring convincing evidence to substantiate it. What is left is not a purer faith, but the unsatisfactory I-know-not-what of rationalist discontent.

On that note, may I wish all my readers a very happy Christmas.



## Consenting adulterers?

US attitudes to infidelity are mixed, but lying is still unacceptable

America does not know what to think about adultery: this will not make it any easier for President Clinton to deal with the new charges against him. There are still millions of American puritans, not least in states such as Arkansas, who keep the old Protestant faith. For them, adultery is what it was to the first settlers in New England, a crime against God and man. In the mid 17th century, adultery was a capital offence in Massachusetts. Cotton Mather, the great historian of the early settlers, reports the case of a "miserable man at Weymouth", near Boston, who committed adultery, had a stroke, confessed his sins and was hanged.

Now there is the morality of Hollywood on the one hand and of political correctness on the other. The morality of Tinseltown, or of Donald Trump's ever-glowing lamp of publicity, is that adultery is a fashionable accessory, part of the sensational life of the culture. In Hollywood, no one turns down an invitation because the star is leading a promiscuous or adulterous life; it enhances the attraction of the party.

Political correctness is puritanical in its own way, but has its own scale of values, which relate largely to the pressure groups which created it. Sexual harassment can cause more offence than adultery itself, because it is seen as the greater threat by the American women's movement; by and large, adultery has been condoned by American feminists on the argument of personal liberty. Homosexual sex can be more acceptable than adultery because the gay rights lobby attacks any criticism of homosexual conduct as homophobic. Adulterers do not seem to have a lobby — there is no adulterers' pride movement — so criticism of them is not inhibited by the code of political correctness.

President Clinton might well feel confused. He lives in a society where adultery is very widespread, and even admired in certain circles. Accountants, professors — except with their students — cab drivers and actors can all get away with it. Clergymen and politicians are in danger if they get caught. Public opinion ranges from puritanism to "anything goes", with the complex new morality of political correctness thrown in. The confusion is not much better in Britain, though we have no Hollywood, few puritans, little political correctness and have never attempted to reduce the incidence

of adultery by capital punishment.

Most Americans do nevertheless still think that adultery is wrong. They do so for traditional though not necessarily religious reasons. They consider that adultery is usually some sort of a betrayal, a breach of the marriage vow, painful to the partner and damaging to family life. American women are more likely to resent adultery in politicians than men, because they view it as a greater threat. Yet most Americans have seen too much adultery to regard it as in any way a unique sin. It is wrong, but it does not belong to that category of wrongs which destroy all future possibility of relationships. In politics, therefore, some adulterers are more damaging than others. A politician who has an affair gambles with his political life; it is Russian roulette.

Neither America nor Britain has a well developed doctrine of the difference between private and public sins, though there is no shortage of people to argue that we should develop one. Historically, the sins of the flesh have not been regarded as a bar to public office, except in a few places for relatively short periods of history. In the late 19th century, Dilke and Parnell were destroyed politically by liaisons which they could probably have survived in France, and could probably, though not certainly, survive in modern Britain. Among the greater prime ministers, Robert Walpole lived openly with his mistress until his wife died, and then married her. Their daughter, the delightful Maria Walpole, then aged 17, was given the rank of an earl's daughter, to the indignation of the gossips. In history, successful national leaders have had almost every kind of sexual temperament, from grave to gay.

Some doctrine of the division between private and public life needs to be made if modern publicity is not to destroy all too many more political careers. Yet the difficulty is obvious. There are still large groups of puritans and of women who will not accept this division. These groups may be sufficient to decide the election results. They are likely to regard

any attempt to separate private and public morality as an underhand attempt to reject morality itself.

Even if one could define this separation between private conduct and public life, there would still be secondary problems, which President Clinton may have to face. Even if adultery is tolerated, events associated with it may not be.

Three of these problems have come up particularly often. The first is that a public man should be in control of his actions at all times. He may drink but he must not be a compulsive drunkard. He may take risks — indeed he will have to take risks — but he must not be a compulsive gambler. He may break his marriage vows, but he must not be a sexual addict. Individual conduct may be accepted as inherently fallible, but obsessive and uncontrolled conduct destroys public confidence in a man's or in a woman's character. We do not want to be ruled by addicts, whether the addiction is sex, drugs or drink.

The second matter is scandal. It is one of the penalties of politics that appearances have to be maintained, even if the reality is otherwise. This can be unjust, since politicians may be punished for being found out rather than for what they do, but such is the condition of public life.

President Clinton now faces something more dangerous than an ordinary scandal: a nightmare of accusations running out of control. From the beginning he had a reputation as a great womaniser. There was the particular evidence of his long-term affair with Gennifer Flowers, itself quite credible: there are now the 11 telephone calls logged in one day to an alleged woman friend; there is the new evidence of the four state troopers, which alleges reckless sexual indiscretion, and the abuse of public services; there is the new gossip about Hillary; there is the suicide of her supposed lover, Vincent Foster; there is the story of his missing life in the White House; there is the alleged connection with the sav-

ings and loans scandal; there is the repayment of the \$50,000 loan: there is the troubled Whitewater company — the name unfortunately reminiscent of both the White House and Watergate — in which the Clintons had invested substantially. This is the sort of scandal which seems to leap from tree to tree like a forest fire.

The third point is the possibility of a cover-up. Here the boundary between private and public could easily have been crossed, as it may have been — nothing has been proved — by the business relations with Whitewater and the savings and loans. It is agreed that the President repeatedly rang the state troopers to try to persuade them not to go public. He maintains that their stories were untrue, and that they are motivated by financial gain. The troopers suggest that he implied their job prospects would be better if they stayed silent. If that were true, the President would have used his private position to try to conceal his private conduct. It was the Watergate cover-up, not the original burglary, which destroyed President Nixon.

This scandal comes at a particularly disappointing time for the Clinton Administration. The success of the Nafta vote in November and the Gatt round in December had made it look effective for the first time. Bill Clinton's public opinion ratings had improved, and the commentators were beginning to revise the judgement that this was to be a one-term presidency. Now President Clinton is threatened at least with a serious loss of public confidence, and at worst with the possibility of further investigation or legal action. It is no wonder that the White House is so anxious.

The vital question now seems to be about the unexplained suicide of Vincent Foster in the summer, which is still being investigated. He is now portrayed as Hillary Clinton's lover; he was the Clinton's leading financial adviser, and his desk was carefully weeded after his death. That suggests, perhaps unfairly, that he may have had foreknowledge of the sort of public and financial problems that can destroy a presidency. The private moral issues may be less immediately dangerous, though attracting even more publicity, but these, despite the moral confusion of America, could cast a shadow over Clinton's re-election prospects in 1996. It was during the 1992 New Hampshire primary that Gennifer Flowers made her original allegation. The next New Hampshire primary is only two years away.

William Rees-Mogg

## A free vote for fairness

Matthew Parris  
advocates equality  
in age of consent

It seems the Government is to allow a free vote on the age of homosexual consent early in the New Year. There may be three options: no change, 18 as the new age, or equality with heterosexual consent at 16. What signals, if any, will be given to MPs by their party leaders? Do the parties have official or even unofficial policy stances on age of consent? Some do more than others.

The Ulster Unionists are wholeheartedly against any reduction. Most opposed even 21 as an age of homosexual consent. The Liberal Democrats are wholeheartedly in favour of a reduction, though whether all will support 16 as the age of consent remains to be seen. Labour's shadow Home Secretary, Tony Blair, supports equality personally, but only personally. Labour MPs will feel under pressure to support a reduction, but some will choose 18, some 16, and a handful may oppose any change. My guess is that Labour numbers in both the "18" and "equality" camps will be substantial.

What of the Tories? We do not yet know how "free" the Tory vote will be of whips' pressure. I expect the vote will be genuinely free, but that some senior ministers, including the Prime Minister, will make plain their personal preference for 18.

This will make a difference. Support for 18 could vary between one-third and two-thirds of the Conservative Party, depending on the signals they receive.

It is not impossible for advocates of equality (like myself) to believe that 16 may win, but we do have to admit that it could be 18. And we know that even 18 might fail if supporters of equality refuse to switch their votes should their own option not succeed. What should we urge upon them? First, we should urge them to stick to their guns and support equality, all-out. But if that vote fails?

Sir Ian McKellen of Stonewall (the gay pressure group of which I am also a member) believes that 18 would be worse than nothing. For there are three powerful arguments. First, that as our logical case is for equality, 18 no more means it than 21. Second, that if 18 is accepted, Parliament may feel it has concluded the matter for a decade or more. The 1967 Sexual Offences Act lasted more than a quarter century. Third, you do not go into battle discussing the possibilities of compromise.

I profoundly respect this point of view. The alternative (towards which I am myself drawn) is that half a loaf would be better than no bread. This is also based on three arguments. First, reform, even to 18, will save real flesh-and-blood people and prevent real prison sentences and suicides. Second, you do not encourage, or thank, friends prepared to come at least some of the way with you by telling them they might as well stay at home. Finally, although in logic a social reform should proceed in one great leap, in practice (as with votes for women) it often proceeds by a series of small steps, each one, taken alone, illogical, but each helping society come to terms with changing attitudes. To portray a compromise on 18 as a vicious attack on homosexuals may be sending the wrong signals to a generation looking for reasons for confidence.

Both points of view have much to commend them. Both are powerfully felt. I hope the debate within the gay movement will be amicable. Yesterday's news takes me back to an anxious personal moment, 11 years ago. It was almost midnight on October 25, 1982, when I rose to speak on the Northern Ireland (Homosexual Offences) Order, extending the 1967 Act to the province, where homosexuality remained wholly illegal. I was 32, a Conservative MP. I had learnt my speech by heart. I had seldom felt so nervous. I spoke after Ian Paisley and Enoch Powell, both opposing the Order. My speech concluded: "Hon Members luckier than I may find that personal conviction gives wings to their argument. The more powerfully they feel, the more powerfully they can speak. Unfortunately that is not so with me. I can happily argue the toss; but where I feel as deeply, and as strongly, and as personally as I do on this issue, argument altogether fails me. I support the measure with all my heart."

I went to bed half expecting the wall to fall about my ears next morning. Nothing happened. The press missed it. The debate passed almost unremarked. Midnight is a good time to do these things.

The forces of reform are unlikely to get off so lightly this time. It would have been easier to leave the issue alone. The decision to come to grips with it is to the personal credit of the Prime Minister. For his pains he will be berated by gay extremists for not making 16 the only option. Elements on the reactionary right (who like to complain that he follows the line of least resistance) will now berate him for resisting the crowd.

They are all wrong. The moral right does not represent mainstream public opinion, any more than the gay left represents the attitudes of most homosexuals. In this brave move, John Major and Michael Howard will have more support than they may think, both outside and within the Conservative Party.

## The mask slips

SEASONAL goodwill seems to have broken out in John Patten's education department. Oxford University's *Cherwell* newspaper has received a letter from the Education Secretary which appears to apologise for his outburst last month when students picketed his constituency surgery.

After the disturbance in his Oxford West and Abingdon constituency, Patten said he was "ashamed to represent yobbish students from Oxford". In his letter, he clarifies the comment by saying he does not mean all Oxford students. His comment was directed particularly to Balliol undergraduates, he says, whose left-wing caucus has regularly demonstrated against government plans to curtail student activities.

"It's a very long letter which actually wormed its way around to an apology," says *Cherwell* editor Chris Taylor who promises to publish for the beginning of term on January 14. "We will edit it down and give a reply saying: 'Fair enough Mr Patten, but we don't think it's going to make up for all the years of neglect.'"

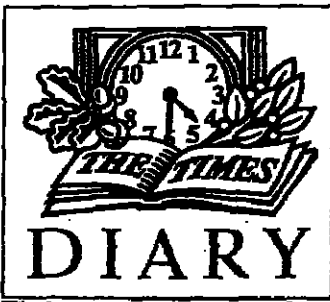
Patten, meanwhile, has left the tawdry business behind him and is

heading for Venice for the Christmas break. There Lord McAlpine will be entertaining some old chums, including, it is said, Sir Denis and Lady Thatcher. Not that Patten is having anything to do with the gathering, he confided at his Christmas party this week. "He wasn't thrilled by the idea of meeting Lady Thatcher," says a guest. "He talked about donning a Venetian mask to avoid her."

At least British Rail is trying. Delayed passengers on the Preston to London Euston express on Sunday were mollified when a guard announced they could claim a free cup of tea or coffee at the buffet. The buffet, sadly, had run out of lids for their cups, so the guard gathered all soiled lids, washed them and dispensed to the thirsty.

Lords a leaping A WARNING for Virginia Bottomley: she is stirring high passions in powerful places over the threatened closure of the Royal Marsden's cancer unit in Chelsea.

Among the peers outraged at the threat to the world-famous unit is the former Tory Cabinet minister



Lord Boyd-Carpenter. His daughter, Sarah Hogg, is of course head of John Major's policy unit. So there has been unusual interest in a recent visit he made to No 10 to bend the Prime Minister's ear about the Marsden. "The whole thing would be devastating if they close the Chelsea site, which is a new building and full of wonderful equipment — that is cheating," declares Lord B-C.

Shampoo set CANVASSING techniques have taken a new turn in Humberston, where the Tory MP for Bridlington, John Townsend, features naked but for a bottle of shampoo and some fairy lights — in an advertisement for his wine shops.

Admittedly, the advertisement is on the radio, but a nervous

voiceover describes Townsend approaching, clutching champagne and twinkling lights, yet otherwise entirely naked. The ads are a surprise Christmas present for Townsend from his son John, who helps run the family's House of Townsend wine stores. "We all have wicked senses of humour, particularly at Christmas," says Townsend's wife Jennifer. Staff at the store are more prosaic: "He's had a big impact on sales already."

Green light THERE will be gatherings this yule where the wine is passed the wrong way round the table — with the connivance of its makers. But the Californian vintners who have brought their port alternative, Starboard, to the UK — and advise that it should be passed to the right — have not escaped unscathed with their gimmickry.

Unable to challenge the name of the wine, the port industry has exacted revenge on the Starboard logo, a triangle with a small star in the middle. "A triangle is the device for W. Dow's port, established in 1798," says Tim Stanley-Clarke, spokesman for Symington Port Shippers, which owns Dow's. "So we asked them to change it, and they agreed." Henceforth there will be no triangles on the Californian version. "We were pretty surprised that they objected," says Michael Blaylock, winemaker at Quady Winery in California. "We didn't anticipate this. It's like having a patent on a circle."

### All together now

AS THE country's bishops bicker over the existence of the three kings, heartwarming news of religious unity comes from north of the border. The Church of Scotland, the Episcopalian Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church of Scotland have sent out a combined Christmas card.

Refuting suggestions of cost-cutting, Ann Davies, the Church of Scotland's press officer, says the card shows how closely the factions work together. "We wanted to do something ecumenical," she says. In fact, the picture on the card is of an Andean Indian shepherd with Peruvian sheep.



Alan Duncan, the Tory MP for Rutland who lent his Westminster house to John Major during the 1990 leadership campaign, has finally been rewarded. He is to become parliamentary aide to health minister Brian Mawhinney.

### Hailing Taxis

PORTERS were treading softly at Sotheby's yesterday after staff had enjoyed a Germanic Christmas knees-up to celebrate the success of the week-long sale of Princess Gloria von Thurn und Taxis's family chateaux in Bavaria.

The auction house's Bond Street viewing gallery was transformed for the evening into a Bierkeller, staff were exhorted to arrive in appropriate dress, and a German oompah band pumped out the music.

Lord Gowrie, the aesthetically-minded chairman, put on a brave face in the face of such unrefined jollity, but sadly he could not quite bring himself to join a considerable number of his male colleagues — by donning Lederhosen.

مَكْدُونِ الْأَصْل





## KEEPING THE FLAWS

The reform of the Child Support Agency is disappointing

The changes in child maintenance regulations announced yesterday by Alistair Burt, the social security minister, are a cosmetic response to a deep-rooted problem. After the shambling performance of the Child Support Agency in its first months, reform of some sort was inevitable. But Mr Burt's proposals do not address the fundamental flaws of the system set up by the Child Support Act.

When the agency was first launched three years ago, Margaret Thatcher said it would "give the lone parent back her morale and her confidence". Its laudable objective was to make errant parents pay for the upbringing of their children and to improve the lot of single mothers, too many of whom receive no maintenance at all. In practice, however, the agency has done as much to wreck families as it has to support them.

Too much of its attention has been directed to responsible fathers who are already paying maintenance. Many men with second families have found themselves unfairly burdened by maintenance bills which, in some cases, have trebled or quadrupled. On Tuesday an inquest in Mansfield heard that a divorced man killed himself after the agency more than trebled his payments to his former wife.

Mr Burt's proposed reforms draw on the equally cautious recommendations of the Commons social security committee this month. Absent parents with second families who already have maintenance agreements of some sort will now be given 18 months to assume their new liabilities. Likewise, the amount of income which low-paid fathers may keep will be increased to prevent them sinking into dependency upon income support. Staged reductions in the cost of care as children grow older and the waiving of the agency's collection fee will further reduce

the financial burden upon many fathers. These reforms are reasonable enough. In particular, the phasing in of payments should reduce some of the distress which the new policy was causing to responsible fathers. But the government is still far from addressing the most important structural defects of the system.

Instead of removing the ridiculous rigidities from the formula used to calculate maintenance, Mr Burt has merely modified payments. The agency still needs proper discretionary power to enable it to take full account of the peculiar circumstances of each case, such as debts, outgoings and travel expenses. At present, for instance, "clean break" arrangements in which a father hands over the family home to his former wife count for little in the calculation of maintenance. Retrospective legislation always has unhappy consequences and in this case the over-riding of existing agreements between former spouses has led to manifest injustices. Greater flexibility and a proper appeals procedure are essential if the system is to operate fairly.

Detailed reform will achieve nothing until the agency's goals are clarified. Its main objective is still to remove £530 million from the welfare budget in its first year. Leaked memoranda sent to its officials have shown that the agency is specifically targeting affluent fathers to achieve this limited objective. Though the financial burden of single parent families to the state is certainly in need of restraint, the CSA must be more than a branch of the Treasury. Its success should be assessed by the justice of its decisions and the help they bring to individual children. Until the agency is given more sophisticated targets, it will remain a reckless force in the lives of families.

## THE END OF THE BEGINNING

There is still time to improve South Africa's constitution

South Africa's last white parliament yesterday voted into force an interim constitution, designed to steer that country to majority government in 1999. It is a document that is both a source of wonderment and of frustration. It is remarkable that it should exist at all. That it does exist confirms that South Africa has more than its reputed share of statesmen and realists.

There are still political groups — the Conservative Party and the extremist AWP of Eugene Terreblanche — who oppose the very concept of non-racial democracy. There is no position more untenable than theirs in today's South Africa even though they still need to learn that truth. More important for the immediate future of the constitution are the flaws and omissions that have so far rendered it unpalatable to others within the so-called Freedom Alliance, an association of conservative groups, both white and black. For Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and his Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and retired general Constand Viljoen, leader of the Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF), the rejection of the constitutional option is not one of basic principle; their objections are based on unfulfilled demands and a perception of unprotected rights.

Both Chief Buthelezi and General Viljoen, at least in the postures they strike in public, are holding out for "homelands", the former for an independent KwaZulu-Natal for ethnic Zulus and the latter for a "Volksstaat" for willing whites. Both demands, if undiluted, would present major problems for the new state. If, however, the core of their bargaining position were a demand for greater regional autonomy, more progress might be made. Neither the National Party nor the African National Congress (ANC) has been blind to the possibilities here. The demand is entirely valid. In fact, on its fulfilment rests the future of a successful transition to multiracial democracy.

The interim constitution does provide for devolution of power to provincial governments in areas such as education, health,

welfare and policing, but Pretoria will retain broad powers of intervention, to impose "uniform national standards", and to protect national security or the national economy. Provinces will not be able to impose taxes without central government approval. There is too much centralisation in all this.

Equally, the demand for a sovereign "Volksstaat" is a dangerous one. Yet there is a sprawling valley of political options between a concession of statehood and an absolute denial of separate identity. An independent "Volksstaat" or KwaZulu-Natal would produce instability; but so too will blunted aspirations for devolution of power. An embittered Chief Buthelezi could hold South Africa violently to ransom.

This is only an early stage in a long process. Those elected in April 1994 will act not just as legislators but as members of a constituent assembly, charged with the task of drafting a permanent constitution by May 1996. It is that constitution which is the most important, and which must face, squarely, the questions of genuine federation and of entrenched civil rights. The right to property must be guaranteed, and not qualified heavily as it is under the interim constitution. Guaranteed, too, must be the absolute freedom of the judiciary, and its insulation from the vagaries of political change.

President De Klerk and Nelson Mandela have given themselves until 24 January 1994 to woo the Freedom Alliance into the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), although that should not be viewed as an inflexible deadline. Politics of such significance must not be placed in the stocks of arbitrary time-tables. It is still possible for concessions to be made by all sides and for the "dead" Parliament to be resurrected to ratify any amendments. The constitutional process in South Africa did not cease yesterday. The "last-ditch" initiatives were less than they seemed. There will be many more calls on the special pragmatism that has made Messrs De Klerk and Mandela so justly renowned.

## SNAP, CRACKLE, GROAN

The authentic pop of cracker mottoes is to make you wince

Why does no other nation in the world make such a comedy of Christmas as the British? Because they are not crackers. Boo-boom. Along with pantomime, Christmas crackers are a peculiar national ritual. Those twee paper tubes, wearing knickerbocker garters at either end, tugged apart with difficulty, and usually misfiring, are a triumph of tawdry extravagance over content.

What you get, if you manage to pull the tube and recover its innards from beneath the table, are a paper hat that splits because it is several sizes too small, a plastic gismo of an impractical nature, and a dreadful motto, riddle or joke on a slim rectangular strip of paper. Learned sociologists have now established that however expensive the cracker, the jokes are always awful, on purpose.

Typical or witty or political or naughty jokes would make too sharp a point in crackers, which are simple pleasures for children. So they are prohibited. What has 16 legs, 14 testicles and two tiny breasts? course. Not a hope, because it is mildly rude. What is grey, has four legs and a trunk? A mouse going on holiday. Too Surrealist by half. What is worse than an octopus with tennis-elbow? A centipede with athlete's foot. Now you're talking.

Jokes about royals and divorce are

banned from crackers this year, in case they end up on the wrong table. Or so say public relations officers for the cracker manufacturers. In any case, proper and political jokes, being subversive, are dangerous. Crackers should be made of softer stuff.

The things you are going to pull this week, unless you are priggish enough to escape the nonsense, are the most awful jokes and riddles in literature. Why did the hedgehog cross the road? To see his flatmate. What has four wheels and flies? A Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea garbage truck. What is it that stings and has four yellow legs? Two canaries. What happens when the human body is completely submerged in water? The telephone rings.

Bad conundrums are no modern invention though crackers, like Valentine cards, are Victorian. Some of the oldest jokes in English are deplorably vulgar. The Exeter Book, circa 940, contains riddles that make this season's mottoes seem almost witty. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Slender shows off to Anne Page with awful riddles. With its puns and homophones and other deep layers of wordplay, English is a language apt for dreadful old jokes as well as poetry. We have to suffer crackers as well as glory in Shakespeare. With English you buy the whole package, not just its intellectual frills.

## Gorbachev's record and the problems of a free Russia

From Mr Hugh Lough

Sir, In my opinion Frank Allaun is mistaken — in his praise of Mikhail Gorbachev — to say that perestroika brought about the Soviet leader's downfall (letter, December 15). Gorbachev deserves all credit and the gratitude of the world for starting the ball rolling which transformed the Soviet Union. That should not blind us to the fact that he desperately wanted to stop it rolling well before the Soviet Union and all it stood for disappeared.

In deference to his hard-line Communist colleagues Gorbachev fatally failed to implement perestroika at a time when bolder steps might well have prevented the terrible economic privations which followed, or at least might have made recovery quicker.

When Boris Yeltsin saved Gorbachev from the August 1991 coup by hard-line Communists Gorbachev himself signed his own political death warrant in his first address to the Congress in Moscow when he called for the kiss of life for the Communist Party and the survival of the Soviet socialist system, the very last things that the majority of the people wished to hear. Gorbachev had long made clear he wanted a more efficient Communist Party and Soviet system, not their abolition.

As for glasnost, it was still a fairly limited form of openness under Gorbachev. Indeed, Gorbachev's attempt to censor and throttle Moscow press revelations of the privileges of the Soviet politburo elite, including Gorbachev, was one of the principal causes of the

split between him and Yeltsin. Gorbachev was never elected President in a free vote: he was appointed by the Communist Party. Yeltsin, by contrast, courageously rejected that party's criminally corrupt system at least two years before he was elected President in a democratic election.

Yours faithfully,  
H. A. LUNGH,  
23 Glen Road, Fleet, Hampshire.  
December 15.

From Mr Lawrence R. Whyte

Sir, Mr Frank Allaun is partly right. The problem with post-Cold War policy towards Russia is that Western governments and bankers have tried to impose democracy and fundamental economic reform, simultaneously, on a country and peoples that are little understood.

Whilst the Russian people were not naturally communists, they are very definitely nationalists and patriots (and not only those who voted for Mr Zhirinovsky).

Western governments were so intent on saving the "tens of billions of pounds a year" (Mr Allaun's phrase) from reduced defence spending that they forgot a simple political truth which they rarely, and at their peril, forget in elections at home. Whereas people do not always vote for their pocket, they seldom vote against it.

The simple truth is that you cannot mix the introduction of democracy with draconian economic reform: you must do the latter first, and then the former.

Having commuted regularly to

Russia over the last seven years, I found last week's election results were hardly surprising. What is surprising is how unexpected they were for our leaders.

What is frightening is the thought that they will continue to have their collective heads in the sand rather than realise that just because the Communists have gone does not mean that the world is a safer place: perhaps just the contrary.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
LAWRENCE R. WHYTE,  
440 Louisiana Street,  
Suite 1440,  
Houston, Texas 77002.  
December 19.

From Mr Dan E. Mayers

Sir, There is a wholly unwarranted belief among the Western democracies that a people who have been released from an oppressive governmental regime will automatically vote in an enlightened fashion for Western democracy.

The recent Russian election should go far to shake this silly belief. People accustomed to freedom and democracy need time to learn to savour its not unmixing blessings.

There is much to be said for the Confucian ideal of a just and benevolent ruler to lead people towards democratic institutions. Yeltsin would probably fulfil this ideal; it is his misfortune to be forced to deal with so many democratically elected bigots.

I am, Sir, an admirer of Confucius,  
DAN E. MAYERS,  
Lorien, Wadhurst, Sussex.

## Doubt and deliberation on the doctrines of Durham

From the Reverend Dr Kendall S. Harmon

Sir, One of the great ironies of our century must be that in the era in which more "Hell on earth" has occurred than ever before, the doctrine of Hell in the next life has lost its meaning in the Church on an unprecedented scale (letters, December 18, 21).

In spite of his infuriating style, the Bishop of Durham is right to bring this question before us. The truth is, there is no way to get around Hell. Some 19th-century thinkers argued that no person is bad enough for God to damn them, but in the century of Auschwitz and the Khmer Rouge this is not credible.

Other more profound attempts, such as that of the late Bishop John Robinson, claim that God is too loving to damn any person. The trouble here is that while God's love may be ingenious it will not be coercive. In the words of one of the finest Eastern Orthodox theologians of his day, the late Paul Evdokimov: "God cannot force a single atheist to love him and therefore we are, one hardly dares to say it, the hell of his divine love, the vision of a person plunged into his or her own solitude" (*L'Amour Fou de Dieu*, Editions de Seuil, Paris, 1973).

Sincerely,  
KENDALL S. HARMON,  
252 Savannah Road, Summerville,  
South Carolina 29485-5264.  
December 18.

From Mr Michael Loveland

Sir, As a teacher of the Christian religion up to GCSE and A level in a

secondary school I was, of course, overjoyed that the Bishop of Durham had chosen to provide me with the relevant material for my classes in their study of Christmas in this secular age.

I took the opportunity to gauge both the nature of their belief in the Christmas story and their reaction to Dr Jenkins's comments on it (report, December 20). The reactions reflected a surprising level of acceptance of the story, even to the extent that five out of 12 non-Christian A-level students accepted the Virgin Birth and six out of 12 accepted the visit of the wise men.

Among Christian students, even those who confessed to only a nominal belief, the acceptance of the Christmas story was even more overwhelming.

It may well be that Dr Jenkins has underestimated a basic need, reflected amongst these young people, to have a simplicity of faith as a haven of spirituality in an otherwise secular environment. Obviously the 33 pupils I questioned cannot be said to be representative of the population, but they do represent a potential church-going future which the Church would do well to take note of.

In Dr Jenkins's favour was the fact that of the 12 non-Christians, five believed that his remarks were helpful to potential Christians.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL LOVELAND  
(Head of Religious Education),  
Wirral County Grammar  
School for Girls,  
Heath Road,  
Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside.

From Mr George W. Keeling

Sir, As one saddened and disillusioned by the increasing divisions within the Christian Church, I cannot help wondering whether the Bishop of Durham is a secret channel through which God is "working his purpose".

It is, in my humble opinion, a considerable achievement if, according to your report of December 15, Dr Jenkins has succeeded, by his latest pronouncement, in uniting the traditionalists and the evangelicals, if only in their mutual indignation!

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE W. KEELING,  
21 Fielded Avenue, Breaston, Derby.  
December 15.

From Mr Richard Littler

Sir, There is a pernicious sect gathering members in the West Country, the sole purpose of which is to raise doubts about the existence of the Bishop of Durham. Such subversion is surely misplaced at a traditional time of hope and certainty.

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD LITTLER,  
Heath Barton, Pinhoe, Exeter, Devon.  
December 21.

From Mr Peter Hargreaves

Sir, We three kings of Orient aren't. Yours in the faith,  
PETER HARGREAVES,  
Croft House, 34 Queen Street,  
Horncastle, Lincolnshire.  
December 20.

the possible results of his actions (e.g., a hospital casualty department on a Friday night) and save the taxpayer from great expense.

Yours faithfully,  
JANE REYNOLDS,  
Sandal, 68 Firs Road,  
West Mersea, Colchester, Essex.  
December 18.

From Mr Paul Fairley

Sir, Mr Charles Barrow (letter, December 17) expresses concern at the number of drivers tested for drink-driving and complains about how few drivers subject to drink-driving tests are convicted in relation to those tested — he cites a ratio of one in six. I find his argument spurious. It is surely the fact that as many as one in six are found to be over the limit which forms the case for allowing the police power to breathalyse when they perceive it to be justified.

Mr Barrow's sense of humiliation at being tested under the public glare should be measured against the agony of relatives and friends of those killed by drunken drivers.

Yours faithfully,  
PAUL FAIRLEY,  
1 Benjamin Street, EC1.  
December 17.

## Technical education

From Mr George Curtis

Sir, Had Prince Albert lived on to a ripe old age, rather than die when he did, would either the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser or the director of the Royal Victoria Society have had cause to write their letters (December 14), the one on the impact of technology, and the other on the parlous state, for want of money, of Prince Albert's Memorial?

The Royal Commission on Education of the later 1860s might well have seen its recommendations implemented under Prince Albert's influence, rather than pigeon-holed by status quo educationalists, and we might dwell in a society wherein arts graduates were numerate and scientists literate, and technical edu-

cation as highly esteemed as any other, as it ought to be, to the undoubted benefit of the nation.

If it were so we would still be cock of the roost, instead of a mere battery hen in the European Union's protectionist wire cage against reality, awaiting economic extermination by better educated, more energetic peoples, exploiting inventions we have, more often than not, brought into being, but signally failed to market, usually for want of technical literacy in monied quarters, allied to a very spineless and short-term view of the world in those quarters.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE CURTIS,  
Dalebrook House, Dedham,  
Colchester, Essex.  
December 14.

## Britain's reward to the royal family

From Mrs Jennifer Miller

Sir, Throughout this century the Queen and her royal parents and grandparents have set an excellent example of family life, though it is ridiculous to assert that they were ever paid to do so, as Mr Cliff Harrison suggests (letter, December 17; also letters, December 11, 14). And how did the Church of England reward them? By frequently dropping the traditional prayers for the royal family, and leaving the prayer for the Queen as their Governor out of the Alternative Service Book, produced in 1980.

Now at last some clergy appear to imagine they have found an excuse for the disloyalty which has been implicit for many years.

Nowadays our royalty are expected to act as official figureheads and to do public work, and it is the Prince of Wales who is evidently prepared to continue to fulfil this role.

Yours faithfully,  
JENNIFER MILLER,  
2 Heathview Gardens, Putney, SW15.  
December 17.

From Mr John Bainbridge

Sir, "An adulterer can be king, the Archbishop of York says" is the headline you attach to Dr Habgood's article of December 16, and the Archbishop writes that "it would be theoretically possible to hold to the symbol of supreme governorship even if in personal terms the monarch only fulfilled the minimum requirement of belonging to the Protestant succession".

Is the Archbishop saying that it is more undesirable to be a Roman Catholic or any other non-Protestant than it is to be an adulterer?

Yours faithfully,  
J. BAINBRIDGE,  
10 Hillcrest,  
Middle Herrington, Sunderland.

From Mr Leo Warren

Sir, David Flusfeder's selection "of the most stimulating viewing over the next 15 days" (Vision, December 18) included the insolent comment that "if the monarch's homily to her people bores you then 'The Alternative Queen's Message' on Channel 4 provides entertainment of a much higher kind".

This is to be broadcast at the same time as the Queen's Message and so is disconcerting, offensive and unfair. What has our Queen done to deserve such mockery and insult — and all on Christmas Day?

Yours faithfully,  
LEO WARREN,  
193 Manchester Road,  
Accrington, Lancashire.  
December 20.

## Goin' a' Thomasin'

From the Reverend S. J. Davies

Sir, John Horsley's first Christmas card, 1843, depicted in *The Times* on December 16, reminded its recipients of their seasonal duty to give alms to the poor.

This prompts me to wonder whether the old custom of "goin' a' Thomasin'" on St Thomas's Day, December 21, when children of the poor went to the big houses of the parish to receive gifts of food or money for the Christmas festival, was peculiar to Gloucestershire and the West Country. It probably lasted into Edwardian days.

I first heard of it as a Gloucestershire rector, and as one ordained on St Thomas's Day more than 50 years ago the recollection has an evocative charm.

Yours obediently,  
S. J. DAVIES,  
The Devon and Exeter Institution,  
7 Cathedral Close, Exeter, Devon.  
December 17.

## Useful toys

From Mr M. M. Charlish

Sir, You recently listed the ten toys most likely to be best-sellers at Christmas. There was not a constructional one amongst them. Finding out how things work, mending them when broken, inventing new things — such toys encourage enquiry and ingenuity, feed the mind and are a continual source of discovery and wonder.

Unless such toys are encouraged, where will our future design, constructional, service and production engineers come from — those who repair satellites in space, those who invent new newspaper printing presses which do not plait the paper?

Yours faithfully,  
M. McEWEEN CHARLISH,  
132 Park Lane,  
Carpisall, Surrey.  
December 21.

## Market forces

From Mr Leslie Wolfson

Sir, I received a beautiful Christmas card today from China — made in Hong Kong.

Yours faithfully,  
LESLIE WOLFSON,  
19 Waterloo Street, Glasgow.  
December 21.







General Sir Philip Christison, 4th Bt. GBE, CB, DSO, MC, who commanded XV (Indian) Corps in operations against the Japanese in Burma during the war, died on December 21 aged 100. He was born on November 17, 1893.

AT THE time of his death Britain's oldest surviving general, Philip Christison has his niche in Army annals for being the first British commander to inflict a decisive defeat on the Japanese in the Burma theatre, thus turning the tide in what had, until then, been a disastrous campaign. His victory in Arakan in the spring of 1944 not only redeemed the earlier British débâcle in the area in 1942-43, but in its nature, it caused a hasty Japanese revision of their opinion of the fighting qualities of British and Indian troops. In Arakan, for the first time, since the headlong retreats of 1942 the British did not withdraw, as expected, when outflanked by the Japanese. Instead they dug on and, properly supplied and reinforced by air, forced the Japanese to take their first steps backward in Burma. Those first steps soon became a rout as they, in their turn, now fell back, pursued by the three corps — IV, XV and XXXIII — of General Slim's 14th Army.

After this victory Christison conducted a remarkable island hopping advance down the shores of the Bay of Bengal to capture Rangoon in 1945. He then went on to recapture Singapore, thus avenging one of the worst reverses to British arms of the whole war, which had taken place with the surrender of the island's garrison three-and-a-half years before. After the war, as Allied Commander-in-Chief Netherlands East Indies, he played his part in attempting to preserve peace in Indonesia in very difficult circumstances.

Alexander Frank Philip Christison was born into a distinguished family. His grandfather, Sir Robert, was in his time, president of the Edinburgh College of Physicians, of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the British Medical Association and Physician in Ordinary to the Queen. His father, Sir Alexander, became Surgeon-General of the Bengal Army, and was the first doctor to use chloroform on active service when, during the Burma War of 1885, he tended an ensign who later became Field Marshal Lord Wolsley.

Philip Christison was educated at Edinburgh Academy and University College, Oxford, where he read medicine, and in 1914 he was commissioned into the Cameron Highlanders. He saw some of the fiercest fighting on the Western front, notably



at the ill-fated Battle of Loos in September 1915. There, amid the carnage of a well-nigh suicidal British advance against a German Army whose heavy guns outnumbered its own by 20 to 1, Christison found himself at one point, among a group of dispirited, leaderless Cameronians whose will to fight had been completely shattered by the mind-numbing bombardment. Striking up in Gaelic with the rallying song "The March of the Cameronians" he steadied the men and reformed them for the fray again. Later in the same day he was blown into a shell hole and found himself face to face with a German soldier. Both drew their pistols and fired, the German falling dead and Christison being badly wounded in the groin. He recovered to fight on and had won the MC and Bar by the end of the First World War.

Afterwards he decided to make soldiering rather than medicine his life's work. He became noted for his

imperturbability, tactical flair and cheerfulness. In Arakan his Indian soldiers were later to call him "Smiling General Sahib".

In 1937 he was given command of the 2nd Battalion, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment; and by 1940 he was Commandant of the Staff College, Quetta. After a short spell in command of 15th Scottish Division, he returned to India and in October 1943 he took over XV (Indian) Corps from General Slim in Burma when the latter was promoted to command the 14th Army.

Christison's first task was to mount an offensive in November 1943 against the heavily fortified Japanese front in the Arakan. He devised the successful tactic of destroying their bunkers piecemeal by blasting the jungle cover away with high explosive shells so that they could be destroyed one by one with armour piercing shot. He also formulated the concept of supplying his corps by air using what was to become the

famous "Admin Box". However, the Japanese 28th Army under General Sakurai Shozo opened a counter-offensive and infiltrated a large force (under the formidable Colonel Tanahashi) through the jungle, which appeared unharmed in Christison's rear areas. They expected the British to withdraw, predicated as they had always done before but Christison would not fall back. Inspired by his determination and supplied by air, XV Corps turned the tables on the Japanese.

After a fortnight of some of the fiercest fighting of the campaign, much of it hand to hand, the Japanese were forced to withdraw. The legend of Japanese invincibility in Burma was shattered; and the new system of air supply, upon which the re-conquest of Burma would depend, had been proven. Christison, who had been proven, Christison, who the year before had been appointed CB, was now in 1944, created KBE in the field, the ceremony being carried out by Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India.

In the final 1945 offensive Christison advanced down the Burma coast using a series of amphibious right hooks to take Akyab, Ramree and Cheduba islands from which Slim's main thrust down the Irrawaddy could be supplied by air and he launched the amphibious Operation Dracula that re-took the Burmese capital Rangoon on May 3, 1945, just before the monsoon brought operations to a halt. Throughout, the enemy were constantly outflanked and outwitted. In the battle of Ramree Island, Christison was awarded an immediate DSO for personally rallying his leading assault troops. It was an award never before given to a lieutenant-general and one of which he was understandably proud.

After temporarily commanding the 14th Army he was then appointed Commander-in-Chief Allied Land Forces South East Asia. In that capacity and as the only British Commander-in-Chief engaged with the enemy he took the surrender, on September 3, 1945, of the Japanese Seventh Area Army from General Itagaki and the South Seas Fleet from Admiral Fukuchama on board HMS Sussex.

Christison's war was not over. On September 29 he landed with the advanced elements of his corps at Batavia (now Jakarta) as Commandant Allied Forces, Netherlands East Indies, to supervise the disarmament of the Japanese garrison and to repatriate the Allied prisoners of war. Because of the political and hostile tensions that existed he considered this the most difficult and delicate responsibility he was ever given. But showing firmness and diplomacy he

discharged it with complete success and, in the words of the British official historian, "He created the situation, which, for the first time, made constructive negotiations possible".

After a short tenure as GOC-in-C Northern Command, Christison was given the job that he had always wanted: GOC-in-C Scottish Command and Governor of Edinburgh Castle. He retired from the Army in 1949 and settled in the Borders where he was a fruit farmer for over 40 years. Throughout this period he played a prominent part in the community and was a Deputy Lieutenant of Roxburghshire. He also freely gave his time to the chairman or president of over 24 various societies and associations.

In his private life he was a keen ornithologist, publishing two books on the subject — *Birds of North Baluchistan* (1940) and *Birds of Arakan* (with Aubrey Buxton, 1946). He was also a military historian and his booklet on the Battle of Bannockburn has been adopted by the National Trust for Scotland as the official handbook for visitors to the battlefield.

Christison was a talented musician, he read and wrote Gaelic and was a student of Celtic literature and music. He loved field sports and fished the rivers Spey and Tweed as well as shooting regularly until the age of 95.

The next year he made the generous gesture of handing back the 16th-century samurai sword of General Mochiro Yamamoto to his widow, Yamamoto, who was commanding in Java when Japan capitulated, had surrendered it to Christison during the British re-occupation of Indonesia. He had known Yamamoto when he was an attachment to the British Army in England in 1929.

The celebration of his 100th birthday on November 17 this year was begun with a skirl of pipes at dawn, at his home in the Borders town of Melrose, where bands, choirs and dancers continued the festivities throughout the day. After an Army Air Corps Bystand 116 guests turned up to pay their respects to the old soldier who was surrounded by his relatives, including great grandchildren.

In 1916 Christison married Betty, daughter of the Right Rev A. Mitchell, Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney. They had a son and three daughters. His wife died in 1974 and he married in that year Vida Wallace Smith, MBE. She died in 1992.

He leaves two daughters. His son was killed in Burma during the war and one of his daughters also predeceased him.

## ALAN HILL

Alan Hill, CBE, publisher and one-time managing director of the Heinemann Group, died on December 17 aged 81. He was born on August 12, 1912.



ALAN HILL was the foremost educational book publisher of the second half of the 20th century. He combined remarkable energy with an unassuming gift for anticipating exactly what schools and universities would be looking for in the years ahead.

In himself he was a colourful character who often affected the mien of an absent-minded professor while retaining a mind as sharp as a finely-honed knife. In 1988 Hill published his autobiography, *In Pursuit of Publishing*, an introduction to the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe wrote of him: "He clearly likes books and people. He even likes authors."

Born in Barwell, Leicestershire, Alan John Wills Hill came from the tradition of English Nonconformist radicalism, remaining all his life a supporter of the Labour Party. His father was a village schoolmaster who rose to become president of the National Union of Teachers; his mother was the daughter of a missionary in the Cameroons. Educated first at Wyggeston School, Leicester, then at Jesus College, Cambridge, his contemporaries at the latter included Robert Gittings and James Reeves, both of whom he was later to publish with considerable success.

While he was still a schoolboy he met Enid Malin. On a Saturday in 1929 they agreed that one day they would marry, she then being 14 while he was 16. They finally achieved this end on August 4, 1939. Thereafter she provided both the solid infrastructure and the warm companionship for the rest of his life.

Hill joined Heinemann's in 1936, leaving only to enter the RAF in 1940 where he began as an aircraftman 2nd class and ended up as a squadron leader. Returning to Heinemann's after the Second World War, he re-launched the educational department which quickly blossomed into Heinemann Educational Books, by any standards the

most successful postwar educational publishing venture. Throughout nearly 40 years he worked alongside Tony Beal and Edward Thompson, founding the African Writers' Series and publishing actors and musicians like John Gielgud, Michael Redgrave and Yehudi Menuhin.

Eventually the firm became the publisher to the National Theatre. With a great deal of overseas work behind him, Hill was elected the first chairman of the Education Publishers Council and was appointed CBE in 1972, the year before he took over as managing director of the entire Heinemann Group.

He never quite resembled the high-powered executive. Distracted and slightly disorganised, he would arrive at a friend's house for supper and announce that he had to phone Tokyo immediately on business, or, in an equally dishevelled mental state, ring the same friend at 6.30am or 11.30pm the next day seeking some crucial piece of publishing information. In the office he was kind and thoughtful to seniors and juniors alike. He would seem to be sleeping through a meeting, then wake, exactly at the right moment, to propose a solution to a problem that everyone else had missed.

He was indefatigable. Retirement at 67 meant nothing to him. He remained a consultant to Heinemann's, and particularly to Heinemann, Nigeria, to the day of his death. The world of books will be a darker place without him.

He leaves his widow, a daughter and two sons — one of whom is also a publisher.

## DORIS WILLS

Doris Wills, psychotherapist, died on November 23 aged 84. She was born on November 30, 1908.

DORIS WILLS was a child psychotherapist who trained at the Anna Freud Clinic in the 1950s. She became well known internationally for her pioneering work with mothers and visually-impaired infants and young children. She was born in Wimbledon, the eldest of four children, with two brothers and one sister. Her mother had a keen interest in music and painting. Her father was a barrister who, for a short time, served as a Liberal MP.

Doris Wills was educated at Wimbledon High School but left school with no clear idea about what she wanted to do. She undertook a year's secretarial training, and then spent three months in Africa before returning to train as a nursery

nurse. She was very fond of children but did not find this work satisfying. In the 1930s she moved into psychology, working first in the assessment and therapeutic institute set up by Charlotte Bühler, one of the pioneers in developmental psychology. In 1936 she went on to take the two-year diploma in psychology at University College London organised by Sir Cyril Burt. This allowed her to work as a psychologist.

However, the Second World War drastically affected her direction. When it came, she worked first in Huntingdon and later in Hampshire, in each case working with billeted children. Many of these children had severe emotional difficulties which were exacerbated by separation from home.

After the war she joined the staff at the Tavistock Clinic, working as a psychologist and participating in the training of other psychologists. By this time, a child psychotherapy training programme had been started at the Tavistock Clinic under the auspices of John Bowlby. Doris Wills herself, however, was drawn to the work of Anna Freud, having heard her speak before the war. A training course had been started in Anna Freud's Hampstead Clinic in 1947, and she was accepted for the second year of the course.

In 1960, having completed the training, Wills moved to the Anna Freud Clinic as a staff member. At that time the incidence of blindness in child-

ren was higher than it is at present owing to the prevalence of *retrolental fibroplasia*, a condition resulting from an excess of oxygen administered to premature babies in incubators. The nursery could be attended by children daily, and had both a therapeutic and research orientation. The aims included both the understanding of the vicissitudes of development experienced by visually-im-



paired children, and the extension of knowledge of the role of vision in normal development.

Doris Wills was an active committee member of the Association of Child Psychotherapists, which she helped to found, as well as a lively participant in clinical and educational events at the Anna Freud Clinic. But she continued to regard herself as a psychologist, serving as a committee member of the

British Psychological Society for several years. Coupled with her emphasis on always seeing the uniqueness of each child, this interest in other points of view ensured that she was widely respected by workers in the field of visual impairment.

In the 1970s, for five years, she taught a specialised option on blindness in development within the Master's Course on Developmental Psychology, run by John and Elizabeth Newman at the University of Nottingham. She greatly enjoyed this teaching which alerted students to how adjustment to blindness in later life, as well as in childhood, could be supported by a fuller understanding of emotional implications of this impairment.

By the 1980s Doris Wills had retired from this teaching and from the Anna Freud Clinic. She retained an interest in clinic events for some time and contributed to the foundation of two important trusts. One, the Mary Kitzinger Trust, has focused on promoting research and teaching, concerned with emotional and developmental needs of visually impaired children. The other is the Child Psychotherapy Trust which has developed from an idea initially conceived by Doris Wills and colleagues into a flourishing organisation for promoting awareness of the needs for, and functions of, child psychotherapy.

Her last years were troubled by illness. She is survived by two brothers and a sister.

## PROFESSOR E. W. YEMM

Professor E. W. Yemm, formerly head of the Department of Botany of the University of Bristol, died on November 22 aged 84. He was born on July 16, 1909.



TED YEMM was renowned for his meticulous care as an experimentalist in plant physiology and biochemistry and for his many contributions in these fields and also plant ecology. He was a first-class teacher whose sound judgment and good counsel were widely sought.

Edmund William Yemm was educated at Wyggeston School, Leicester, where his all-round ability was evident from the debate as to whether he should specialise in classics or the sciences; the fact that the biology master was also the cricket coach tipped the balance. Yemm's love for cricket being of long standing. However, at Oxford he felt that cricket involved too much time away from his experimental work. Nevertheless he won a football Blue and became a member of Vincent's, to the pleasure of Queen's College.

There, in 1935, Yemm was elected a research fellow; he also gained a Christopher Welch Scholarship and acted as a demonstrator to W. O. J. and the well-known plant physiologist.

Appointed as a lecturer at the University of Bristol in 1938, he left soon afterwards on war service which involved forestry, radar, gun batteries and investigations on penicil-

lin in the Glaxo laboratories. On returning to Bristol he became a Reader, in 1950, and from 1955 to 1974 was the Melville Wills Professor of Botany. His wisdom and integrity were appreciated on many committees of the university and from 1970 to 1973 he served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Much of his research was on seedlings and leaves of barley, recorded in a lengthy series of papers entitled "The respiration of barley plants" in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society* and the *New Phytologist*. Analytical methods were developed for the estimation of carbohydrates and nitrogenous constituents in plant tissues and considerable light was thrown on the interactions between carbohydrate and nitrogen metabolism. He contributed a major publication on the respiration

of plants and their organs to the encyclopaedic treatise *Plant Physiology* edited by F. C. Steward of Cornell University where Yemm held a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship. Other research on plant physiology involved the development of chloroplasts and photosynthetic activity.

In plant ecology Ted Yemm collaborated before the war with J. L. Harley in a study of past development in Thorman Mire in Wensleydale, and he later helped to elucidate the post-glacial history of the Gordale Valley in North Somerset (Avon). For many years undergraduates were taken for a week's field course to the sand-dune system of Braunton Burrows, North Devon, where he played an important part in establishing that the opening vegetation and the very rich flora, with many rarities, is partly attributable to the extremely low fertility of the sand. Research on roadside vegetation at Biliby, Gloucestershire, now in its 36th year, owes very much to Yemm, the findings being of considerable current interest in relation to global warming.

All who sat at his feet recognised his very broad knowledge, his ever helpful attitude and his extreme modesty. He was never happier than when working in the laboratory but in his retirement he derived great enjoyment from gardening.

He is survived by his wife Marie, one son and three daughters.

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## Church news

## Appointments

The Rev Kingsley Jones, Vicar, Colwich w Great Haywood (Lichfield); to be Vicar, Winshall (Derby).  
The Ven Brian Lea, Archdeacon of Northern France (Europe); to be Rector, Chiddingly w East Hoathly (Chichester).  
The Rev Neville Manning, Vicar, Dawley St Jerome (London); to be Rector, Denton w South Heighton and Tarring Neville (Chichester).  
The Rev Margaret Maslen (formerly Child), Curate, Portland; to be Assistant Curate, Trintemer (Bath and Wells).  
The Rev Richard Maslen; to be Assistant Curate (NSM), Ilminster (Bath and Wells).  
The Rev Hugh Moseley, Vicar, Ringmer; now also Rural Dean of Lewes and Seaford (Chichester).  
The Rev Arthur Payne, Team Vicar, Wickford and Runwell Team Ministry (Chelmsford); to be Priest-in-charge, Wixhall All Saints and Failand (Bath and Wells).  
The Rev George Perera, Team Vicar, St James, Maghull; to be Vicar, St Hilda, Hunts Cross (Liverpool).  
The Rev Robin Ray, Rector, Exford w Exmoor, w Hawkridge and Whitpool; to be also Rural Affairs Officer and ACORA Link Officer (Bath and Wells).  
The Rev Anthony Rose, a Chaplain to the Forces; to be Rector, Colchester, Christ Church w St Mary at the Walls (Chelmsford).  
The Rev Harry Salisbury; to be Curate, Eastbourne St Mary (Chichester).  
The Rev Roydon Screech, Vicar, St Edward, New Addington, Croydon (Southwark); to be Selection Secretary to the Advisory Board of Ministry, Church House, Westminster.  
The Rev Derek Spears, Vicar St Matthews, Reading; to be Vicar, Early St Peter, Reading (Oxford).  
The Rev John Tipping, Vicar, Pittingbourne St Mary; to be Priest-in-charge, Mersham w Hunsill; Sevington (Canterbury).

## FEMINIST PLAY BY M. BRIEUX

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT) PARIS, DEC. 22

*La Femme Seule*, a new play by M. Brieux, was produced this afternoon at the Théâtre du Gymnase. M. Brieux again comes forward in this play as a thesis-monger, but not with so much success as in *La Robe Rouge* or *Les Hameçons*. In *La Femme Seule* he discusses the position of a well-educated young girl who is forced by financial ruin and the lukewarmness of her betrothed to earn her own living. She seeks her fortune on the editorial staff of *La Femme Libre*, a feminist publication. In a moment of financial crisis the male proprietor of the paper reveals the egoistic brutality of man. Thereby, the heroine, indignantly rejects his proposals and finds employment as a manageress of women workers in her uncle's factory. Here it is the economic selfishness of man that drives her from her work. The men in the factory object to female competition and strike. There is a riot, and nothing is left in the factory but the women who weep.

The play served to show how slow France has been to respond to the feminist movement. To an English audience the arguments

## ON THIS DAY

December 23 1912

The French dramatist Eugene Brieux (1858-1932) wrote not only about the condition of women in France but also about baby-farming and venereal disease; his play on this subject *Les Avariés* was put on in London under the title *Damaged Goods*.

used in favour of and against independent women would be extremely familiar. All the phrases which have been current in England for the last ten years were used upon the stage with an emphasis and air of finality which showed that the playwright was convinced of their truthfulness. "Women cannot defend their country." "No, but they provide it with defenders." "Women cheapen labour." "Because they drink less." "Woman's place is at home cooking and looking after her husband and children." "Yes, but the labour-saving devices of machinery have diminished her domestic duties and the State looks after

the children." All these assertions and defiant replies are now commonplace in England, and as they are the chief material of *La Femme Seule*, it cannot be said that M. Brieux has shown any startling originality. He has provided neither side of the controversy with any fresh argument; although he has delivered a social sermon, he has neither any very definite text nor any clear conclusion.

## THE MILLIONTH VISITOR TO THE "ZOO"

The numbers of visitors to the Zoological Gardens naturally fluctuate with the weather, with the nature of other public attractions of special interest. Hitherto the largest number in any one year was 915,764, when in 1976 the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, deposited his Indian collection. Up to and including last Saturday the number of visitors for the current year was 997,007; yesterday 1,918 visitors passed through the gates, making a total of 998,925. It is practically certain that on Boxing Day the millionth visitor for the year will pass through the gates. This will be the highest on record in the history of the society, and it is the intention to mark it by giving a free pass for 1913 to the person whom the authorities adjudge to be the millionth visitor.



● High street discounts ● Supermarket sales ● Border barriers ● Serengeti safari

# New price war breaks out

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

BRITAIN'S leading travel agency chains will unleash the biggest price war ever seen in high streets this weekend in an effort to carve out the lion's share of a predicted two million package holidays which will be sold over the next few weeks.

The campaign will begin in earnest on Sunday when television, commercial radio stations, newspapers and magazines will be flooded with advertisements offering savings of at least 10 per cent on most holidays. By the time the campaign ends in February, the travel agencies and tour operators will have spent about £30 million on persuading potential clients to book with them.

Going Places, a newly created amalgamation of Pickfords, Hogg Robinson and Houghton Travel, said yesterday that it would be cutting its prices by 11 per cent in an attempt to make its new name and 546 shops widely known.

Lunn Poly, which with 705 outlets, is still Britain's biggest travel agency chain, responded with a similar cut while AT Mays and Thomas Cook reduced prices by 10 per cent. Many small travel agencies, however, could be forced out of business because they cannot afford to give away all their profit to attract custom.

Sue Ockwell, of the Association of Independent Tour Operators, said: "Customers should ask themselves how these big chains can both cut their prices and spend such vast sums on promotion. The fact is that they can't without

On Sunday, Britain's leading travel operators will start a huge media campaign, offering savings of at least 10 per cent on most holidays

cutting service to a minimum and selling their own insurance at a vast profit. Smaller travel agencies can provide impartial advice to ensure people get the holiday that most suits them, rather than one which might cost less but is unsuitable."

Lunn Poly is part of the Thomson group and Going Places is owned by Airtours. This kind of amalgamation worries the Office of Fair Trading, which is deciding whether to refer the industry's growing move towards "vertical integration" to the Monopolies & Mergers Commission. A decision is not likely until the end of January, by which time up to half of the ten million summer holidays available this year will have been sold. Already up to 20 per cent have gone at an average price of £370 a head.

Kevin Welch, marketing director of Going Places, said: "We will be open in our new livery on December 27 and we will have big savings right across the board which will make us the market leader." Lunn Poly's marketing director, Richard Bowden-Doyle, was equally adamant that nobody would be able to undercut his company. "There are going to be some tremendous bargains," he said. "We have a reputation for making sure we offer the best deal in

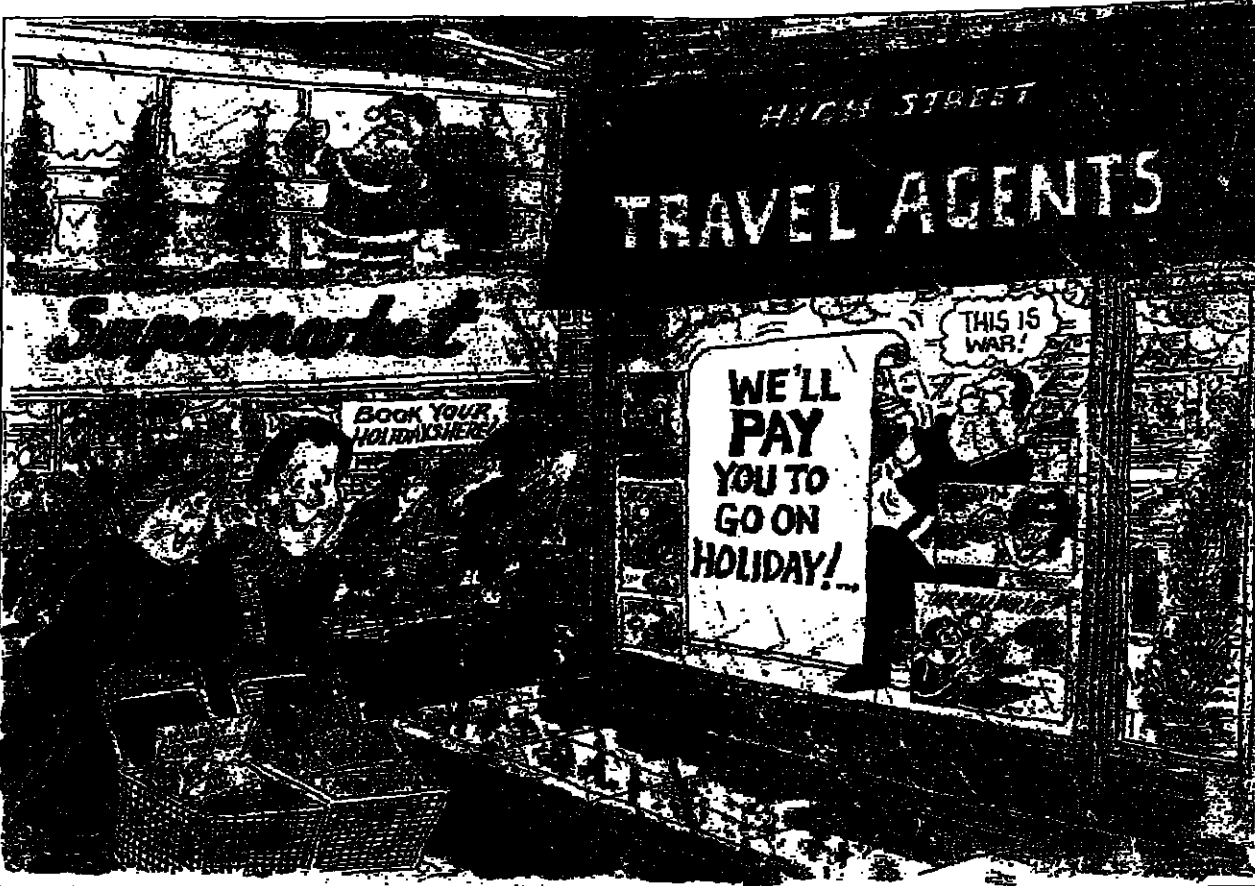
the high street and we are determined to maintain it."

Peter Shanks, Thomas Cook's commercial chief, said his company would not be undersold. "We guarantee we will absolutely not be beaten on price by any other travel agent during the critical post-Christmas booking period."

The big winners in the coming battle will be the growing number of people now able to afford a holiday as the recession has ended.

The best bargains are likely to be found in resorts in the Eastern Mediterranean and Florida. Tour operators have already paid for airline seats and hotels, but the recent drop in the popularity of these destinations has worried them. They are thus ready to discount heavily in order to attract custom. Increased demand for holidays in Spain and the Caribbean, however, mean that these are unlikely to be reduced in price by more than the standard 10 per cent travel agents' discount.

How long will the cut-price war continue? Initially, until January 3 but some chains are certain to try to extend their sale. By early February, however, they will all be financially exhausted that they will have to raise prices again. This is the only industry in which, when demand goes up, the price comes down.



## Holidays off the shop shelf

By HARVEY ELLIOTT AND MARIANNE CURPHEY

PACKAGE holidays could be sold like soap powder by the end of next year. Banks and building societies would also be able to sell holidays over the counter after a change in Abta's rules last week freed tour operators from having to use traditional High Street travel agents.

Thomson, Britain's biggest tour operator, immediately set up a review of its existing distribution network and, Costco, the shopping warehouse, said it would be "very interested" in the proposal. If the review succeeds, Thomson will approach stores, including Marks & Spencer

and Costco. Charles Newbold, Thomson's managing director, said: "We are going to look at broadening our distribution base to take in non-travel retailers."

Paul Moulton, Costco's managing director, said it was "perfectly possible" to introduce such a scheme if holiday packages would not be sold elsewhere at lower prices. Costco's American stores already offered the service. "If we could get it right, we would not hesitate. By cutting out the agent, we could offer packages very cheaply," Tim Wright, sales and mar-

keting manager of Worldspan, a computer reservations system, said: "It is easy to dial into a tour operators' computer network. But it might make supermarket checkout queues longer."

According to George Marcell, Airtours group sales and marketing director, the most cost-effective method at present is "through established agents."

The Halifax Building Society said it would not be looking to sell holidays because it already offered a discount-booking service to selected cardholders. Marks & Spencer said it had not

been approached by Thomson. "It would mean giving over space in our stores to sell someone else's goods."

Steven Freidmann, chairman of Abta's travel agents council, said the 3,700 companies represented by the council were "very concerned". "We will," he added, "argue that tour operators should remain with the existing travel agent network, because someone working in a supermarket or bank would hardly be expected to be capable of giving expert travel advice." Abta, could monitor its agents so they all reached the required standard.

### FLYAWAYS

## Four-star skiing

SEVEN days' cross-country skiing around Kandersteg, in the Swiss Bernese Oberland, is available from January 2 with Inntravel Winter Innactive (0439-71111). The price of £499 per person includes Swiss Air flights from Heathrow and seven nights' half board at the four-star Hotel Kandersteg.

□ NIGEL Perks of Gibbs Farm Safaris is leading two groups to follow the wildebeest migration on the plains of the Serengeti, in Tanzania, including visits to the Ngorongoro Crater and Lake Manyara. This all-inclusive off-the-beaten-track camping holiday costs £2,448 per person through Art of Travel (071-738-2038) departing on February 19 and March 5.

□ THE more mature, single and unattached holidaymakers are offered a seven-day stay in the Hotel du Lac et du Parc in the Dolomite mountains of northern Italy next summer for £645, departing on July 3. Solo's (081-502-0855), which specialises in holidays for the independent over-50s, offers the package - which includes return scheduled flights from Gatwick to Verona and half-board in single rooms, social programmes and excursions - in its new summer brochure.

□ SAVINGS of £539 per person are available from Hayes and Jarvis (081-741-9902) throughout January on 14-night holidays at Shaw Park in Jamaica. Flights are from Gatwick each Sunday and a 14-night half-board holiday now costs £995.

□ HIGHLIFE London and UK Breaks (0800-700-400) are offering five-night self-catering skiing breaks at the Aviemore Leisure Centre in Scotland from £80 per person.

□ WINDJAMMER Landing, on the west coast of St Lucia, has one-bedroom suites and two or three-bedroom villas available in January from £1,172 per person for seven nights. The package, which includes BA flights, is available through Caribbean Connection (0244-341131).

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## Spain to bar the £12 Britons

By HARVEY ELLIOTT AND MARIANNE CURPHEY

AN estimated 800,000 British holidaymakers who do not have a full passport will have to buy a new EC passport before being allowed to enter Spain next year.

The one-year visitor's passport, costing £12 and used by about one in ten of British visitors to Spain, is too easy to obtain and is open to abuse. Spanish officials believe. Under new rules approved by the Spanish Cabinet last week, use of the temporary documents will be banned if the Spanish parliament approves in the new year.

The officials say the move brings Spain into line with other European Union members. The Spanish Embassy in London said that because the temporary visitor's passport was issued over the counter and no further proof of identity was required, it could be used by people who really needed visas.

A spokesman for the Association of British Travel Agents (Abta) said: "Other European countries are quite happy to accept the British visitor's passport and we can't understand why the Spanish have suddenly decided they will not."

There are bound to be people who book last-minute holidays and then realise that their passport is out of date.

German Porras, director of the Spanish tourist office, said: "This decision does not impose any additional restriction on British citizens wishing to travel to Spain."

#### A visitor's passport



## Battle over Terminal 5

THE first salvo in what is certain to become a protracted and noisy battle over plans to build a fifth terminal at Heathrow airport was fired this week when the British Airports Authority submitted its outline case to the Government.

Local councils and environmental groups are preparing their own counter to the proposals, which go before a public enquiry in the spring. If planning permission is granted, the first stage of the terminal would open in 2002 and the completed building, capable of handling 30 million passengers a year, be ready by 2013. Already detailed design work is under way and BAA is

claiming that the project will be environmentally friendly and create jobs and income for the whole of Britain.

Sir John Egan, BAA's chief executive, said yesterday: "More and more people want to fly and over the next 20 years the number of passengers using our London airports will have nearly doubled. Terminal 5 will ensure that Heathrow retains its position as the world's number one airport in the face of increasingly fierce competition from Europe."

BAA claims that 14,000 permanent jobs hinge on the decision to build the terminal: it would create 6,000 new jobs and protect 8,000 more.

## FIVE CARIBBEAN HOLIDAYS FOR TWO TO BE WON

FOR DETAILS SEE THE TIMES THIS FRIDAY

مكتبة من الأصل



● Christmas in the Holy City ● Beware of big bens ● Racer's new role

# No room at the inn or festive tree

BY LOUISE HIDALGO

PALESTINIAN children will, it is hoped, parade through the main square of Bethlehem tomorrow evening in what has been heralded as the first real celebration of Christmas in the small West Bank town since the intifada, the Palestinian uprising, began six years ago.

Five choirs plan to sing carols in Manger Square to welcome the thousands of pilgrims expected to gather there tomorrow to celebrate midnight mass.

But there are those who fear that with the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord teetering so soon after it was made, visitors may have to wait another year for the festive cheer they had hoped for. And Bethlehem's town mayor has given a warning that the first public celebrations may yet be cancelled if a dispute over the flying of the Palestinian flag on the town hall is not resolved.

Despite the underlying tension that still affects the little town, tour groups of 16,500 Christian pilgrims will visit Bethlehem during Christmas week, a little over 1,000 more than the number that paid homage at the Church of the Nativity last year.

Tomorrow, 2,000 Palestinian Scouts will revive the tradition of greeting the Roman Catholic patriarch, Monsignor Michel Sabbah, at the town's plaza as he arrives to celebrate midnight mass, while choirs hold a festival of carols outside the Church of the Nativity.

British religious tour operators say there has been hardly a room to be had in Bethlehem

**The first seasonal celebrations since the peace signing are to be held in Bethlehem. But a dispute over a flag and a Christmas tree may upset the event**

or in Jerusalem this Christmas, and some have even cancelled trips because they expect problems in getting accommodation and flights.

But in Bethlehem itself the sense of celebration is likely to be muted. The delay in implementing the first stage of September's historic accord — withdrawal of Israeli troops from Jericho and Gaza — has dampened local spirits.

The shabby souvenir shops around Manger Square still bear the graffiti of the intifada and again this year pilgrims will have to undergo rigorous bag and body searches before entering the Church of the Nativity.

Some factions of the PLO have given permission to local Palestinian Christians to celebrate on Christmas Day. But Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, which opposes the peace accord, has ordered them to boycott the festivities. Many are likely to do so.

In a gesture which to some Palestinians, frustrated by years of occupation, is being seen as yet another example of Israeli intransigence, a Christmas tree given to the people of Bethlehem by the Norwegian government, hosts of the secret peace negotiations, has failed to arrive — because of Israeli red tape.

Putting on a brave face, Elias Freij, Bethlehem's Christian Arab mayor, says: "We

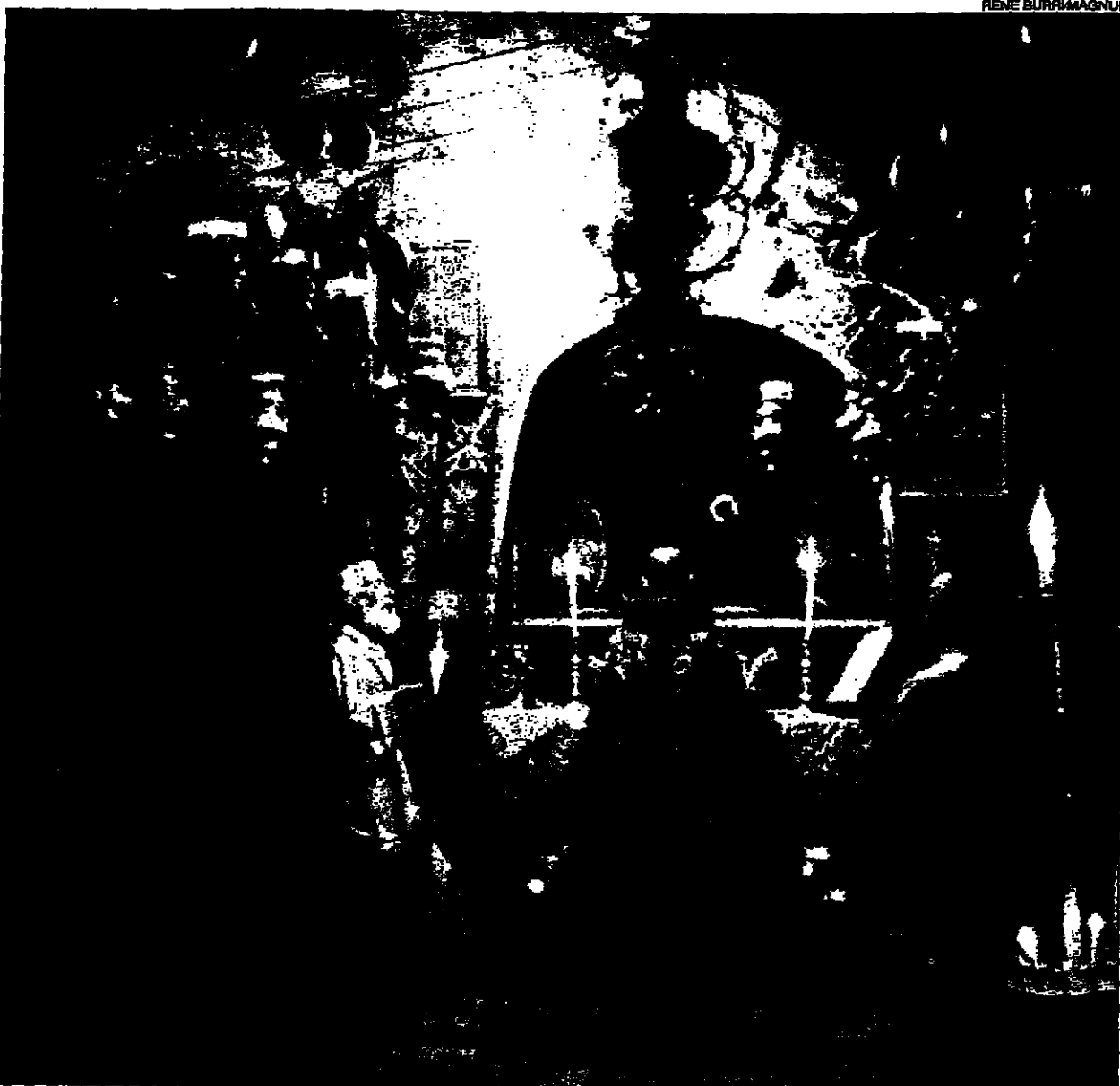
will be celebrating Christmas this year more than we did last year, but less than we hoped."

Bethlehem may not have given up completely on Christmas 1993 but already the talk is of next year when, under the terms of the peace accord, the town should have reverted to Palestinian control and the Israeli army will have left. Earlier this month, the Israeli Ministry of Tourism co-hosted a conference in Bethlehem with the university's school of hotel management to discuss how they can co-operate to ensure that it will be a Christmas to remember.

"Next year will be very different," Mr Freij promises. Israeli military road blocks will have been replaced with a sign assuring travellers that there will always be a place at the inns of Bethlehem; and there are plans to order 100,000 festive lamps from overseas to festoon the square and side streets, and to hold public performances of a Nativity play.

There is talk of new restaurants and new hotels. At present, the town has only one Franciscan hospice and four hotels to accommodate visitors. Many of the 90 restaurants which existed in 1967 have long since closed.

Religious tour operators from Britain predict that 1994 will be a bumper year if room can be found to house the new visitors.



Pilgrims will undergo a body search and bag check at the Holy Sepulchre Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem

## Frying tonight

BY ROBIN YOUNG

CATERING outlets at Gatwick airport have now been officially rated by an inspection team headed by Egon Ronay. Only three out of 35 have been awarded chef's hats, symbols for the quality of their food. In a similar scheme at Heathrow, 17 of the 45 outlets now qualify.

The inspection scheme was the idea of Sir John Egan, chief executive of the BAA, who believed it would help to lift catering standards and increase turnover. The three Gatwick establishments with pride of place in the airport's first ratings list are Costa's Coffee Boutiques on the landside in both North and South terminals, and the Great Steak and Potato Co in the South Terminal. Heathrow has four new holders of chef's hats: two Garfunkel's restaurants airside in Terminal 1 (landside), and the Seafood and Oyster Bar in Terminal 4 (airside). Three outlets — Café Europa, JJ Moon's and Wetherspoons — have been stripped of chef's hats they won three months ago because "standards have slipped". The top accolade — two chef's hats — went to the two Granary restaurants in Terminal 3 at Heathrow.

## Hill accidents increase

BY RONALD FAUX

CLIMBING accidents in the Scottish Highlands have claimed more lives in 1993 than have accidents on the region's roads.

Figures from the police show that more than 50 hill-walkers and climbers have died, the latest victims being caught by a sudden change to Arctic weather during the brief midwinter days.

Despite the dangers, more climbers than ever are setting out into the most remote hills of Britain, even when the

countryside is in the grip of bad weather. Winter mountaineering courses, organised from the Sports Council's centre at Plas-y-Brenin in North Wales, are fully booked and the winter skills courses run in the Cairngorms by the Glenmore Lodge mountaineering centre are proving extremely popular.

Dave Alcock, the director of Plas-y-Brenin, believes that training courses give the surest preparation for winter climbing expeditions. The

main part of the centre's winter programme focuses on the western Highlands between the climbing areas of Ben Nevis and Glencoe, covering navigation skills and moving over less demanding snow slopes and ridges.

Mr Alcock says: "The courses have become popular probably because more people are around in the hills generally and want to extend their experience by going there in winter."

"It is a logical progression, I

suppose, as the Scottish hills have become easier these days to reach by road. There is also a range of literature on winter climbing to whet their appetites. But training — informal or formal — has to be the key to safety. Learning the techniques, being able to judge the weather and knowing how to navigate or survive in a blizzard is the best armament."

For climbers, a winter day in the Scottish mountains is an exhilarating challenge, but the conditions are unforgiving. Hamish MacInnes, a veteran of the mountain rescue service at Glencoe, says that 90 per cent of accidents happened to hill-walkers and not to people engaged in ice climbing. "We get a lot of Munro-baggers, hill-walkers who collect Scottish summits of 3,000ft or more. They may be more keen to tick off another summit than they are to take account of the condition of the ground or a likely change in the weather."

"Even the lower hills could be lethal when they are ice-bound. Too often visitors underestimate the arctic conditions, the amount of daylight they would have to get back to safety and the time it could take to reach a Scottish summit in bad conditions."

## Lest we forget the pilgrims

BY JOHN YOUNG

THE 50th anniversary of the D-Day landings next June will be probably the biggest gathering of its kind ever seen. It is, however, only one of dozens of journeys undertaken every year to the battlefields and cemeteries of the two world wars by a diminishing band of survivors and by the widows and relatives of those who did not return.

That the cemeteries are there to be visited is due to the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which looks after about 1,750,000 graves on 23,000 sites in more than 140 countries.

The Royal British Legion has been organising pilgrimages to France and Belgium since the 1920s. But many of the widows of those who died further afield, particularly in the Far East, found the cost and complexity of the journeys beyond their means. Their sense of grievance intensified when the defence ministry made arrangements for relatives of the Falklands dead to visit the graves almost as soon as hostilities were over. As a result, in 1985 the Government agreed to subsidise journeys by widows to the graves of

husbands they had lost 40 years or more earlier.

In 1990, the scheme was extended for five more years and, it has just been announced, will continue to the end of March 1996 to take account of the 50th anniversaries of the ending of the Second World War.

So far almost £1.5 million has been made available for 3,000 war widows and 7,000 other relatives to travel to about 40 countries.

The widows pay only an eighth of the full cost. Regimental groups and associations also organise regular visits to cemeteries and battlefields. But Piers Storie-Pugh, head of the legion's pilgrimages department emphasises that the tours are open to everyone. Twenty pilgrimages have been scheduled for next year, starting with Singapore in February and ending with Israel in December. Costs range from £198 for three days in France or Belgium to about £1,500 for some Far East destinations, and include travel and half-board.

Enquiries: Pilgrimages department, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX



Ben Nevis looks magnificent in its winter mantle, but the Highlands are also deadly

## Tickets go on-line

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aisle seat and a vegetarian menu if desired — direct from the PC screen in his or her home or office, and without talking to a single travel agent.

American Airlines, which has been under pressure from the army of computerised on-line shoppers to open up its SABRE and Worldspan systems, has now designed easy-to-use interfaces to let anyone find and book fares directly. The vital equipment is a PC with Microsoft Windows software, a modem and a subscription to CompuServe, the data network.

**Unfit Peak**  
EARLY snow and heavy rainfalls will deny visitors access to a favourite beauty

spot in Derbyshire's Peak District National Park during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

The bad weather has delayed the re-opening of a five-mile stretch of the Tissington Trail, north of Ashbourne, which is unsafe for walkers and cyclists and which is now scheduled to reopen in February.

**New ferry route**  
BRITANNY Ferries is adding a new western Channel route between Poole and St Malo in May to stave off competition from the Channel tunnel, which is due to open the same month.

The company has held down most of its fares and increased the choice of French hotels and gites.

Travel News is edited by Harvey Elliott

## Austrian ski resort is going for gold

BY MINTY CLINCH

THE Austrian ski resort of Bad Kleinkirchheim has appointed Franz Klammer, the former Olympic downhill skiing champion, as its roving ski ambassador.

The idea of using ex-racers to attract the holiday skiers was first hatched in America. Two other former downhill stars, Peppi Stiegler and Stein Eriksen, have prospered as lockdowners in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Deer Valley respectively. More recently, the American downhillers, Andy Mill and Bill Johnson, the 1984 Olympic gold medalist, have been appointed ski ambassadors for Aspen and Crested Butte in Colorado.

Klammer had been courted by the Colorado resort of Telluride but instead chose Bad Kleinkirchheim, just six miles from the village of Mooswald, where he was born. The plan to use Klammer to revitalise the fading fortunes of Bad Kleinkirchheim — winner visitors fell from 500,000 in the 1991-92 ski season to 460,000 last year — was the idea of Wolfgang Eder, the newly appointed tourist director, who says: "He attends our press conferences and allows us to use his name, his image and his pictures to promote the resort."

In a ten-year deal, Klammer receives an annual salary, plus the right to run a bar and ski service shop at the new Strossbachbahn chair-lift halfway up the mountain.

It was in BKK, as it is more conveniently known, that Klammer won his first Europa Cup downhill in 1971. His glittering career included Olympic gold at Innsbruck in 1976, plus 25 World Cup downhill wins.

Last weekend, the Carinthian spa resort hosted Klammer's 40th birthday celebrations at a cost of £250,000.



Klammer: ski ambassador

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ANATOLE KALETSKY 25

What happened to my predictions for 1993?



ARTS 31-33

Lord Palumbo on a terrible year for the Arts Council



SPORT 36-40

Simon Wigg and the great speedway scandal

SEEKING A LEFT-WING JESUS Books 35

# THE TIMES

THURSDAY DECEMBER 23 1993



Grumpy and friends: Parisian job centres may have trouble finding suitable employment for the gang if their Uncle Walt fails to persuade the banks to carry on paying their wages

## Lasmo in £123m sale to PowerGen

By Carl Morkish

LASMO, the debt-laden oil exploration company, has sold a 5 per cent stake in the prize Liverpool Bay oil and gas field to PowerGen, the electricity generator. The £123 million deal, which includes interests in two North Sea gas fields, Ravenspurn North and Johnson, will significantly reduce the company's gearing, which falling oil prices are expected to push towards 100 per cent by the end of the year.

The market has been expecting disposals from Lasmo, which is under pressure to reduce its borrowings. These have remained high since its £1.1 billion bid for Ultramar in 1991. Liverpool Bay, where Lasmo will retain a quarter share, formed part of the Ultramar portfolio and is widely perceived to be Lasmo's best asset because of the low cost of production in shallow waters.

Joe Darby, Lasmo's chief executive, said the company's expectation that net production would increase by 40 per cent to 220,000 barrels per day by 1996 was unchanged.

The book value of the assets was £94 million and analysts reckoned the deal represented a fair price to both parties. But the market remains sceptical about Lasmo's ability to pay a final dividend.

The acquisition places PowerGen firmly in the lead in upstream investment in the electricity industry.

Times, page 25

## Ferranti managers aim for buyout

By Ross Tieman  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR managers at Ferranti, the collapsed electronics group, are trying to form an international consortium to buy the business from its receivers. Phil Burton, the marketing director, has begun discussions with John Talbot and Murdoch McKillop, the administrative receivers from Arthur Andersen, the accountancy firm.

The buyout team, embracing about nine executives, is being advised by Richard Stone, of Coopers & Lybrand corporate finance. Mr Stone helped to arrange the successful purchase of Leyland Trucks by its managers from the same receivers this year.

"It has become clear to us

The 3,000 workers remaining at Ferranti's plants enthusiastically back the management attempt to secure financial backing from international partners

that, short of well-known problems stemming from the ISC acquisition, the group has a bright future," Mr Burton said. "Whilst it remains very early days, we do plan to be in a position to commence formal purchase negotiations during February."

The receivers welcomed the buyout proposals. Mr Talbot said he would be "actively encouraging the consortium team to negotiate with potential overseas partners, as the markets for Ferranti's exper-



Talbot encouraging

ise are global and are likely to become more so, particularly in the civil area."

Collaboration between receivers and managers to secure the future of a large part of the business appears inevitable. The receivers have been contacted by dozens of companies interested in buying part or all of Ferranti, but any would-be purchaser will need the goodwill of employees if the company's design teams and their skills are to be kept together.

Would-be external buyers will also be extremely wary because of the circumstances of Ferranti's collapse last month. Although the group has struggled for four years to overcome the difficulties caused by a complex fraud, the receivership was triggered when GEC, the electrical and electronic engineering group, withdrew its 1p share take-over offer after due diligence enquiries.

The receivers were obliged to make about 600 employees redundant almost two weeks ago but they have succeeded in stabilising the business and maintaining operations. Mr Talbot said: "It has become increasingly clear to us, and the management teams we

have been working with, that there are a number of potentially viable long-term options for the future of those businesses."

Managers have ruled out any chance of a successful management buyout without backing from at least one large partner. "Ferranti must be well capitalised and strong enough to compete in the international defence and civil markets," Mr Burton said. "These factors put it beyond the reach of an ordinary MBO."

One potential partner that will almost certainly be invited to participate is Thomson CSF, the French defence electronics group that already has joint venture arrangements with Ferranti.

However, any arrangement concerning the military business, which employs 60 per cent of the workforce, will be complicated by the need for approval from Britain's Ministry of Defence. Not only is the MoD one of Ferranti's biggest customers, it also owns the patents to many of the products developed by the group.

Ferranti shareholders are unlikely to benefit from any offer by the planned consortium. The company is effectively owned by its banks, and proceeds secured by the receivers from a disposal will be offset against its substantial borrowings.

Pennington, page 23

## Euro Disney faces spring showdown

By Martin Waller, Deputy City Editor

THE troubled Euro Disneyland theme park east of Paris will close in the spring unless there is agreement between the banks and Walt Disney, its American parent, over a fresh injection of cash, the company's auditors have forecast.

The French offshoot of Price Waterhouse has effectively qualified the company's accounts, saying that if the planned financial restructuring is not completed "the company would face liquidity problems and might be unable to continue its activities".

The auditors have had to take this cautious view because the park, which has far undershot forecasts made when the project was first financed, could be technically insolvent by April 1.

Walt Disney has agreed to pump in cash to keep the park afloat from next month, but has said if a deal is not reached with the banks by April that timeline will be cut.

The banks believe the American corporation, which operates a successful overseas park in Tokyo as well as its US parks, will not allow its reputation to be damaged by the bankruptcy of its prestigious French venture. They are balking at demands that they forego some of their £2 billion loans, probably in exchange for equity.

For its part, Disney, which owns 49 per cent of the project, does not believe the banks, now compiling their own report on Euro Disney's finances, are prepared to write off such huge sums. "It's a classic Mexican standoff," said one source close to

the company. "It's a battle of nerves - neither of them wants the place to close."

The Price Waterhouse ruling confirms warnings to shareholders from Philippe Bourguignon, Euro Disney's chairman, last month, when he reported an annual £614 million loss. But the share price, always sensitive to bad news, slumped an additional 8p to 395p. The price has fallen from almost £12 in March as institutions have largely abandoned the stock, leaving it to the public.

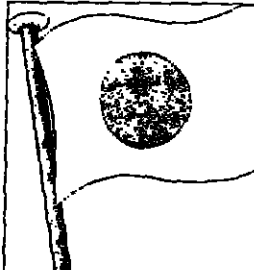
Some analysts are concerned that there may not be time to reach agreement by the April deadline, given the further delay imposed by the banks' own report, being drawn up by KPMG Peat Marwick, and the complexity of the talks. Nigel Reed at Paribas commented: "Euro Disney cannot pay its returns on its debt, so someone will have to go without."

Pennington, page 23

BUSINESS EDITOR Robert Ballantyne

BUSINESS TODAY

FALLING SUN



The rising yen is about to cost Japan its No.1 place among world car producers. America will take over. Report, page 22. Pennington, page 23

RISEING STARS

Two insiders have been promoted at Kleinwort Benson in the wake of the departure of the merchant bank's chief executive. Page 23

FAILING DREAM



Bankers pondering over the future of Euro Disneyland could find a new attraction to raise attendances. Financial Fantasyland Pennington, page 23

SINKING STATUS

British managers are worse paid than counterparts in America, Japan and Germany, and only just beat Malaysians. Page 23

## MFI's open and shut Christmas decision

By Susan Gilchrist

RETAILERS have spent much of the year vociferously campaigning to be allowed to open on Sundays. It is therefore ironic to find the doors of Britain's biggest furniture retailer firmly shut in the week before Christmas, traditionally the busiest shopping week of the year. While the high street heaves with eager shoppers, the aisles of MFI, the fitted kitchens and bedrooms retailer, are empty.

The group has decided to close its 175 stores until December 27 when its New Year sale starts. Some may view

this as commercial suicide but MFI said: "We do this every year. Furniture is not one of the things people want to buy before Christmas. It allows us to give the staff in our stores a rest prior to the sale, which is our busiest time of year."

Rod Whitehead, retail analyst at Goldman Sachs, believes MFI's actions are not as crazy as they sound. "Although much of it is historical precedent, there is a degree of commercial logic. Nobody is out shopping for big-ticket items like fitted kitchens and bedrooms in the run-up to Christmas. Meanwhile the January

sale, which runs for ten weeks from Boxing Day, accounts for 30 per cent of their annual turnover." Indeed Boxing Day is often MFI's busiest day of the year.

Nevertheless the rest of its rivals have chosen to stay open. Jon Massey, chief operating officer of DFS, the specialist furniture retailer that came to the market last month, insists his company would never consider closing before Christmas and says all 27 outlets will be open "every day except Christmas Day".

Furniture retailers have been enjoying a welcome renaissance in recent

months as recession-weary consumers have begun to feel sufficiently confident to make big household purchases. Although retail sales figures have shown strong growth in furniture sales, Mr Whitehead says MFI's fortunes are more closely related to housing activity as at least half its turnover is derived from fitted kitchens and bedrooms. Although MFI disappointed the City with a 7 per cent fall in sales for the year to April 24, Derek Hunt, chairman and chief executive, said turnover was running 3 per cent ahead of last year at the group's annual meeting in September.

## Paramount to favour QVC bid

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

MARTIN Davis, chairman and chief executive of Paramount Communications, was last night thought likely to back a \$10 billion takeover bid from Barry Diller, the man he sacked ten years ago. Mr Diller heads QVC Network, the shopping channel concern.

The board of the Hollywood studio was due to make a statement late last night in the latest twist of the three-month takeover battle, but it was widely believed that the terms of QVC's bid had topped that of Viacom, the MTV-owning programme maker with which Paramount would prefer to merge.

However, Viacom has sought extra time from Paramount to raise more cash - both sides can raise their bids over the next ten days and the victor will be the first to buy 51 per cent of Paramount shares in the market. QVC is offering \$92 a share and Viacom, \$85. Trading in Paramount shares was halted at lunchtime on Wall Street at about \$80.

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MARKETS IN DETAIL PAGE 24, SHARE PRICES PAGE 27

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# Japan's carmakers lose their place in the sun

By KEVIN EASON  
MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

JAPAN is about to lose its place as the world's leading car producing nation, for the first time since 1980. Estimates being drawn up indicate that Japanese producers, punished by the yen's strength, will be overtaken by rising output in America.

At its peak in 1990, Japan made 13.5 million cars, almost 3.6 million more than the US, previously the world automotive leader. Europe has never made more than 13.5 million cars and, this year, continental recession is expected to pull its output back to little more than 12 million.

Forecasters at Automotive News,

an authoritative newspaper for the American motor industry, predicts that US output next year could exceed 11.2 million; some analysts believe the figure could be as high as 11.8 million.

Japanese production is forecast to fall from 1993's ten-year low of 11.1 million, to 11 million.

For the past 20 years, Japanese motor makers have swept aside opposition with their rapid introduction of new models from factories so efficient that European and American competitors looked as though they would be fatally wounded.

But America and Europe have fought back. Now it is Japan's turn to suffer: the country is in deep recession at home and suffering from a strong yen that is crippling exports.

Domestic sales of new vehicles in Japan are expected to fall for the third year in succession, possibly to below 6.7 million. That will be the lowest figure for about five years but the effect of the decrease on home factories is underlined by sharp falls in overseas sales.

Exports have been hit not only by the rise of the yen but also by import substitution by Japanese plants abroad. The opening of plants in the US and the UK has hit the domestic industry hard. Japanese production in America this year outstripped imports for the first time; in 1992, imports were 100,000 cars higher

than local production. At the same time, better models from more productive factories have revitalised America's big three manufacturers. General Motors' output was 8.3 per cent up in the first 11 months of the year, to 3.7 million; Ford's was 18.9 per cent higher at 3.1 million; and Chrysler's rose 11.3 per cent, to 1.3 million. The share of the US market held by Japanese marques has fallen from a 1991 peak of more than 25 per cent, to 23.1 per cent. The turnaround has been both remarkable and painful. For the first time, Japanese carmakers are looking for ways to cut workforces brought up in a national tradition that a job is for life.

For America, however, the damage

has already been done, according to a study by the Economic Policy Institute, a liberal US think-tank. This contradicted the view that Japanese transplants had revitalised America's motor industry. In fact, it argued, they had cost 158,000 jobs. "Transplant" production was, effectively, partly imported, because research and development facilities and key components had not been transferred from Japan.

Though Japanese transplants by companies such as Honda, Nissan, Toyota and Mazda hired US workers, they destroyed other American jobs by using a higher percentage of imported parts than the home-based big three.

## Unisex pension benefits are not compulsory, says Euro Court

□ A question mark remains over whether insurance companies offering annuities will be able to continue to use sex-based tables after this judgment

By SARA MCCONNELL, PERSONAL FINANCE CORRESPONDENT

COMPANIES can continue to calculate pension benefits, particularly transfer values and tax-free lump sums, differently for male and female members of final salary occupational pension schemes, the European Court of Justice ruled yesterday.

The landmark decision, in the test case of Neath v. Hugh Steeper, was unexpected. The decision contradicted the opinion of the Advocate General published in April, which suggested that companies would have to use unisex actuarial factors to calculate transfer values and tax-free lump sums for men and women. The issue was one of several arising out of an earlier judgment, Barber v. Guardian Royal Exchange, in May 1990, which ruled that pensions were part of pay, and occupational pension schemes must offer equal benefits to men and women. Four test cases, including Neath v. Hugh Steeper, were brought before the European Court to decide issues left unresolved by the Barber judgment.

Currently, transfer values for ex-employees who want to take their pension elsewhere, or retired employees who want to take part of their pension as a tax-free lump sum, have these benefits calculated on the assumption that women live longer than men. This means women need larger transfer values to buy the same pension because they live longer. Male employees also have to sacrifice more of their pension to produce the same lump sum as a female employee because men are not expected to live as long.

David Neath was made redundant in 1990 by Hugh Steeper Ltd, a manufacturer of artificial limbs, at the age of 54. He was offered the alternative of a deferred pension or a transfer payment. However,

the scheme calculated his transfer value on the basis that he would retire at the normal male retirement age of 65, rather than the female age of 60, and also used differential actuarial factors. The scheme offered Mr Neath a pension from age 60 with a transfer value of £30,672.59. If he had been a woman, with a transfer value calculated from age 60, it would have been £39,934.56. Using female actuarial factors, the transfer value would have risen to £41,486.25. Mr Neath claimed he was being discriminated against and the case was referred to the European Court by the industrial tribunal in Leeds in May 1991.

The European Court argued that the Barber judgment requiring equal pay did not extend to the way employers chose to fund their schemes and by extension non-pension benefits such as transfer values and tax-free lump sums. These are considered alternatives to pension benefits.

The judgment means that employers will be able to continue to use differential factors for transfers and lump sums if they choose. Most still do but some have moved towards using the same factors for men and women. If the court had ruled that companies must use unisex factors, companies could have been faced with extra costs depending on how the change was implemented. However, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) said the change would probably have been cost-neutral. It said the decision made "abundant sense".

There is still a doubt over whether insurance companies offering annuities can continue to use sex-based tables to calculate annuity rates, as the judgment did not directly address this issue.

Letters, page 25



David Neath and his wife, Pauline, are at the centre of a landmark legal decision

## Construction orders build hopes of recovery

By JANET BUSH  
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

CONSTRUCTION orders increased by 9 per cent in the three months to October compared with the previous three months and were 18 per cent up on a year previously, suggesting that one of the hardest-hit areas of the economy is slowly beginning to recover.

Yesterday's figures from the Department of the Environment backed up news this week that construction output had risen by 0.2 per cent in the

third quarter after 12 consecutive quarters of decline.

In comparison with a year ago, output was still 1.3 per cent down. The construction sector has been much slower to emerge from recession than other areas.

New orders in the private housing sector rose 13 per cent in the three months to October compared with the previous three months and were 26 per cent higher than a year previously, while private industrial orders were up 19 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. In contrast, private commercial

orders were 9 per cent lower than the previous quarter but 11 per cent higher than a year previously.

□ The US Commerce Department has released figures that confirm that, after a worrying pause, the American recovery is strengthening again. Gross domestic product rose at an annual rate of 2.9 per cent in the third quarter, revised upwards from 2.7 per cent. At the same time, inflation remained subdued with the implicit price deflator rising at a 1.6 per cent rate, unchanged from the previous estimate.

□ Germany reported a DM45.1 billion trade surplus in the ten months from January to October, up on the DM31.5 billion surplus in the same period of 1992. The current account deficit for the ten-month period was unchanged between this year and last at DM33.9 billion.

The leading Berlin-based DIW Institute said that a broad European monetary union was an "unrealistic illusion" and that even a more modest union linking a smaller number of European currencies was unlikely in the

foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the institute said that, if economic growth began to accelerate, countries without any fundamental differences in their economies, such as Germany, France and the Benelux countries, should quickly return to narrow bands in the exchange-rate mechanism. The institute said that Germany and France should take the initiative and develop a currency mechanism that would withstand speculative periods.

Economic View, page 25

## French go to supreme court in BCCI case

FRENCH depositors in the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International have appealed to the French Supreme Court of Appeals against a ruling favourable to the French Banking Association (AFB).

On December 13, the Court of Appeals overturned a judgment in favour of victims of BCCI's collapse. The December 13 ruling, which the depositors are now taking to the Supreme Court of Appeals, held that the AFB could limit indemnity for depositors to Fr105,000 each. The depositors had demanded a limit of Fr400,000, the sum provided for in the AFB's "solidarity mechanism", designed to deal with such claims but not used in the BCCI case.

Roland d'Ornano, the depositors' attorney, said that he hoped to have the BCCI court liquidator for France serve writs on BCCI directors to force them to appear before the Paris Commercial Court to make it possible to "put it on record that the directors mismanaged their establishment, and to take a step forward in assigning responsibility".

He hoped eventually to "present the Emir of Abu Dhabi with the bill" for the scandal. The Emir, who held 77.4 per cent of BCCI, has said that he is suing 13 former BCCI executives for \$9 billion.

## Ferruzzi issues cheered

By COLIN NARBROUGH

MULTI-STAGE, bumper rights issues by Ferruzzi Finanziaria, the debt-strapped Italian holding company, and Montedison, its agri-chemicals arm, were warmly received on the Milan stock exchange in a market buoyed by favourable news about Italy's economy.

Shares moved ahead for the eighth consecutive day, reflecting the prospect of subdued inflation and falling interest rates. Investor interest in Ferruzzi stock was led by a good kick-off to its capital rights issue, dealers said.

Shares in Ferruzzi jumped an early 11 per cent, only to end at 2,150 lire (85p), up 4 per cent, while Montedison finished 4.3 per cent higher at 908 lire (36p). Ferruzzi had been well received on the first day of the rights issue on Wednesday, but Montedison had slipped slightly.

The 5,400 billion lire (£2.15 billion) capital-raising exercise forms part of a rescue plan approved by most creditor banks after huge holes in its balance sheet were discovered. In the first half this year, Ferruzzi lost 783 billion lire.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### Irish group buys AGF life firms for £23.5m

IRISH Life, Ireland's largest life insurance, pensions and investment group, has acquired the life assurance business of AGF Holdings for £23.5 million. The purchase of City of Westminster Assurance Company and City of Westminster Assurance Society is being funded by Irish Life's internal resources.

The two companies have a total of 40,000 policyholders and premium income of £8.5 million in 1992. Funds under management are worth a total of £120 million. Irish Life and AGF have an Irish joint venture, AGF-Irish Life, which comprises the Insurance Corporation of Ireland, which provides only corporate insurance, and Church & General, which provides religious and personal lines of insurance. Irish Life holds 30.4 per cent of AGF-Irish Life; 66.3 per cent is in the hands of AGF and the balance is spread among small shareholders.

### Silvermines in talks

SILVERMINES Group, the Irish electronics company headed by Bob Morton, has confirmed it is in merger discussions with Molyneux Holdings, the closed-circuit television group. Silvermines said that such a merger could either take the form of an offer by Silvermines for Molyneux or offer for both companies by a new company formed for the purpose. The enlarged group would have a market value probably in excess of £30 million. Shares in Silvermines, which is capitalised at £12.9 million, were unchanged at 39p; Molyneux, capitalised at £7.3 million, held steady at 36p.

### Czech slowdown

CZECH central bank figures show that inward investment has slowed. In the first nine months this year, the inflow was \$455 million, down from \$600 million at the same stage last year. Air France and the London-based European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which last year took stakes of 19.1 per cent each in Ceskoslovenske Aeroline (CSA), the Czech national airline, have just emerged from a round of emergency shareholders meetings with a deal that satisfies their demand for \$25 million compensation from the Czech government for alleged over-valuation of CSA.

### Filofax buys for £3m

FILOFAX, the USM-quoted personal organiser group, is extending its range of products with the acquisition of Drakes Office Systems for £3 million in shares and cash. Drakes is best known for its Ring Back brand of telephone message and business forms. Tom Drake, its founder, will become a consultant to Filofax and a non-executive director. Drakes made a gross profit of £727,000 in 1992, on sales of £1.7 million. Robin Field, Filofax's chief executive, said his company planned to expand the Drakes business overseas. Filofax shares added 15p to 184p.

### Invesco sells Oak stake

INVESCO, the fund-management group, has sold its 4.6 per cent holding in electronics group Oak Industries for \$12.2 million. Invesco paid \$4.5 million as an interest-free secured loan for the stake in November 1992 as part of its compensation to Drayton Consolidated Trust for investing funds in a company that collapsed. After redemption of the loan note the sale will result in a \$5.7 million (£3.8 million) exceptional profit. Invesco said: "We are now 90 per cent of the way through selling off our non-core interests." The shares were unchanged at 187p. *Tempus, page 25*

### ERF losses continue

TOUGH price competition from European lorry makers striving to counter the effects of recession contributed to continued first-half losses at ERF, the Sandbach truck maker. Even though turnover surged 22 per cent to £66.9 million in the six months to October, the company was unable to make profits from its successful new EC range. Cost cutting reduced losses to £479,000 from last year's £2.72 million. There is no half-year dividend, but the level of the full-year payout will be reviewed when the company has a clearer picture of progress during the second half.

### Symonds improves

IMPROVED productivity following a 25 per cent cut in the workforce helped reduce interim losses at Symonds Engineering. As the group reduced the head count to 155 in the six months to September 30, pre-tax losses came back to £126,000 against £256,000 last time. However, Symonds, which mainly supplies UK conglomerates, has decided to pass the dividend (0.15p). Losses per share were 1.27p (LPS 1.93p). Rod Ackrill, chairman, said the internal changes and an improving trading outlook made him confident that the company would soon return to the black.

### J Billam shares fall

A TRADING warning from J Billam, the Sheffield engineer, caused its shares to drop by 51p to 218p. The company said difficult trading meant one of its subsidiaries, Aircraft and Sheet Metal Engineers, had cut its contribution by up to £100,000 compared to the previous year. A manufacturer for the aerospace and car industries, ASME suffered a reduced workload in the second half, compounded by restructuring costs. Billam said other subsidiaries were trading to expectation and it expected to recommend a final dividend of 3.1p, making an annual 5.3p (5p).

## LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

071-782 7344

### PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARITY COMMISSION  
Charity: James Taylor  
Surrey Charity  
The Commission is invited to make a scheme for this charity. A copy of the draft scheme can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to St Albans House, 87/89, High Street, London, SW1V 4JY. The Commission will consider the scheme and make a decision within one month from today.

### LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE  
CHANCERY DIVISION  
No. 99999 of 1993  
IN THE MATTER OF  
THE COMPANIES ACT 1986  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court dated 18th December 1993 concerning the administration of the estate of the late Mr. John Smith, deceased, is hereby made known to the public. DATED this 21st day of December 1993.  
Solicitors for the above Company,  
D B Coakley, Liquidator.

### LEGAL NOTICES

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986  
FIRST CREDITORS MEETING  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the First Creditors Meeting of the above-named Company, which is being convened for the purpose of receiving and considering the report of the Liquidator, will be held at the offices of the Liquidator, 17, Fenchurch Lane, London, EC3A 3BP, on Thursday, 23rd December 1993, at 10.00 o'clock in the forenoon. The Liquidator's report will be presented and the creditors will be asked to elect a committee of inspection. The Liquidator's report will also contain details of the assets and liabilities of the Company and of the progress of the liquidation. The Liquidator's report will also contain details of the assets and liabilities of the Company and of the progress of the liquidation. The Liquidator's report will also contain details of the assets and liabilities of the Company and of the progress of the liquidation.

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## Swissair in huge loss on airline operations

By COLIN NARBROUGH

SWISSAIR, one of the four medium-sized European carriers that last month aborted the "Alcazar" plan for a joint airline, has revealed a "massive loss" on its airline operations this year.

The Swiss national carrier, thought to have been in better financial shape than its putative partners, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Austrian Airlines and Scandinavian Airlines System, said, however, that it expected aircraft sales and profits from subsidiaries to allow it at least to break even this year.

The airline, which has a cross-shareholding with Delta, the American carrier, last year posted a group net profit of Sfr113 million (£52 million) on 4.7 per cent higher revenue, but core airline operations made a loss.

Otto Loeple, Swissair's chief

executive, who issued his loss warning in a company newsletter, said that the "massive loss" meant, despite pleasing results in September and October, that the airline had "by no means met our budget target". He gave no figures.

Peter Bouw, KLM chairman, this week said his airline was "on the road to profit recovery", although much remained to be done. He said KLM had to strengthen its position as an independent carrier and avoid being dependent on co-operation with other European airlines.

The Alcazar talks collapsed when the airlines could not agree on their American partner, with KLM insisting that it had to be Northwest, in which KLM had a large equity holding. The Dutch carrier last year made a loss of 562 million guilders (£197 million),

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## Malaysia set to

By SUE HEMAN  
INDONESIA CORRESPONDENT

SCHOONBEK, British executives have been handed the perfect Christmas present by P.A. Consulting Group. In its annual survey of international management earnings, P.A. ranks British bosses at number 19 in a table of 20 countries in the developed world, and suggests that they are rapidly being overhauled by their peers in Malaysia, who came last.

The notion that managers in Britain are worse paid than their counterparts in America, Japan, Germany and other

مكتبة الأمل



Roll up, roll up for a white-knuckle ride Betting on the bean counters Seeking a happy new year

## Euro Disney's finest attraction

BANKERS frozen in a Mexican stand-off with Walt Disney over the future of Euro Disneyland might break the deadlock by offering to fund a cost-effective new attraction to boost attendance: Financial Fantasyland. It would start with a tableau of Hollywood executives planning how they could milk as much as possible from a new project funded almost entirely by other people's money. As they progress from this moving sight to a damp site near Paris, hordes of gullible shareholders would then be taken on a highly geared white-knuckle ride through Construction Cost mountains, 30 per cent higher than planned. Already shorn of much of the contents of their wallets, they would then plunge through Disappointment Gulch, where visitors are driven away by high charges and poor weather — 10 per cent below projections in the first summer, 30 per cent in the second. A detour through emu-infested recession valley, where foreign visitors fail to spend what they ought to, leads to a parting of the ways where a mere flick of the switch would reach the final tableau of the insolvent court — all in four thrilling highly compressed years.

At least the near 200,000, mainly French, investors would swell the entry book, especially if they could be persuaded to stay overnight. They would surely flock to learn how they have come to this sorry state, which they should have bothered to read up before they invested. How they do not actually own the theme park. Why the company wrecked its own balance sheet by deciding to write off the start-up costs early. How the venture was managed by Walt Disney for a 3 per cent fee, and how Disney had less incentive than outside investors to keep costs down. Apart from its 49 per cent equity stake, Disney is entitled to a 10 per cent royalty on admissions and 5 per cent on merchandise sales. Disney's interest was relatively lowly geared but Euro Disney is highly geared, with £2.3 billion of debt and high overheads and royalties making attendance and on-site spending critical. Everything has to work for outside shareholders to prosper. It hasn't.

As ever in such cases — Eurotunnel comes swiftly to mind — investors have little standing in the battle between the big battalions to ensure the show goes on after March 1994.

### Ferranti's last stand

AS Pennington duly noted earlier in the Ferranti proceedings, John Talbot, of accountants Arthur Andersen, is a shrewd counter of beans.



News that Ferranti's senior managers are attempting to promote a consortium bid has inevitably served to raise morale within the stricken defence contractor but, it has to be said, this may well provide Talbot and his colleagues Murdoch McKillop with a degree of leverage when it comes to counting beans with the likes of those who inhabit Stanhope Gate.

The message from Phil Burton, Ferranti's marketing director, is that the scale of resources required to permit Ferranti to compete in the international defence and civil markets is "beyond the reach" of an ordinary MBO — thus the consortium concept.

Burton stresses that initial discussions with Arthur Andersen have proved most "encouraging", while the Talbot/McKillop duo "welcome" the initiative and point out that they will "actively encourage" the consortium team to negotiate with "potential overseas partners". Enter Richard Stone, one of Coopers & Lybrand's corporate finance department, to advise Ferranti's managers. But what chance, one might ask, has Ferranti's management of succeeding where Eugene Anderson, Ferranti's chairman (but not a member of the consortium team), failed? It is no secret that Anderson left few corporate stones unturned during his tortuous search for an equity injection and/or strategic partnership. The difference, so it would seem, is that Anderson would not have chosen to negotiate with Ferranti's balance sheet on the table. When Ferranti revealed its 1993-4 mid-year results (prior to GEC's decision to withdraw its token 1p share bid) net debt stood at close on £100 million, while overall exposure amounted to some £155 million. With the enterprise now in receivership, Ferranti's managers insist that, unlike Anderson, they can sit at the negotiating table with a clean, or relatively clean, slate.

### Japan hunts green shoots

JAPANESE governments, eschewing miserable pre-Christmas budgets, like to boost business and consumer confidence before the New Year festivities, when corporations plan their annual spending. Heroic efforts featuring tax and interest rate cuts did not, however, have much long-term impact in the past two years.

probably tomorrow. Income tax cuts have already been discounted. The Japanese public sees little to smile about in the Uruguay Round, with another bullying round of bilateral trade talks with America coming up and is bombarded on all sides by cheerless economic news.

Among the most symbolically depressing is the state of the car industry. A year-on-year output cut of 12 per cent in November is likely to accelerate this month as the big firms bring in more cuts. The year's output will probably only total 11.1 million cars, the lowest for ten years and likely to be lower in 1994. The home market is to blame but Japan, as distinct from its car corporations, has ever less to gain from improving markets abroad. Any gains are being taken up — and more — by overseas production. Toyota announced yesterday that it plans to boost overseas production by nearly three fifths over the next three years, passing a million units in 1994.

The country is not sitting about moping. An economic panel set up by Mr Hosokawa in September was supposed to prepare proposals for the next round of structural change by New Year. In most countries, that would convince no-one. In Japan, these think-ins have actually produced results in the past. Can they do it again?

## Two promoted as Kleinwort abandons hunt for new chief

By Patricia Tehan  
Banking Correspondent

TWO insiders have been promoted to high-profile jobs following the management reshuffle at Kleinwort Benson: the City merchant bank, that led to the departure of its chief executive in August.

Jonathan Agnew, the former chief executive, announced his intention to resign in May. His statement came a few days after Lord Rockley took over from David Peake as chairman and his departure appeared to have been manipulated by other directors.

Mr Agnew, who had joined in 1987 as head of securities, left in August. At the time the bank was no nearer to finding a replacement. Initially it had said it planned to seek a new

corporate finance business has picked up in recent weeks and the company was keen not to break up a winning team

chief executive from outside the company, and possibly from outside the City. But although it searched, external candidates are believed to have been either too expensive or quite happy where they were.

A spokesman said the post of Mr Agnew would not be filled. Instead Sir Nicholas Redmayne, a Kleinwort director and head of securities, and David Clementi, a director and head of corporate finance, will take over the new posts of joint chief executives of investment banking on January 1.

This covers financing and corporate advisory services, equity securities and treasury, and fixed-interest securities. Their brief does not include investment management, which continues to be headed by Colin Malkhy.

Lord Rockley is believed to be keeping investment management as a separate entity with a view to floating it. Yesterday he said he had nothing against a float or partial float of the investment management business, which had always been a separate pocket of business. He said

that over the past six months Kleinwort's operation as an integrated house had improved. "We have had slightly better times than some of our competitors. There was no way I was going to break up a winning team."

Kleinwort's UK and international corporate finance business has picked up recently. It sponsored the flotation of Garmore, the investment management group, in November and the flotation of Scotia, the pharmaceutical company, in October. It also won business from the Italian government, advising on the privatisation of Enel, the electricity company, and helped with the privatisation of the state-owned telecommunications company in India.

Under the new management structure, Lord Rockley will remain as group executive chairman with Simon Robertson as deputy chairman. Mr Robertson and Mr Clementi are thought to have played a role in Mr Agnew's departure.

Lord Rockley said: "Since I became chairman much progress has been made in developing the integrated approach, which has been a major contributory factor to our success in winning new business. The structure now announced formalises that development."

Kleinwort announced yesterday it is to launch Kleinwort European Privatisation Investment Trust (KEPIT) for private and institutional investors who want to participate in privatisations throughout Europe. The onshore trust will be launched on January 11.

## Port stake sale makes P&O £44m

By Colin Campbell

P&O will realise net profit of £44 million in the financial year to December 31 by selling a further 9.47 per cent shareholding in Modern Terminals, a six-berth facility at Hong Kong's Kwai Chung container terminal.

The sale, to local interests for HK\$1.35 billion (£17.4 million), cuts P&O's stake to 5 per cent, likely to be kept for commercial reasons. P&O acquired 23 per cent in 1986. P&O, which is reducing stakes in operations that it does not manage, will use the profit to invest in China, where prospects are seen as encouraging. P&O last month acquired 25 per cent of the Shekou container terminal and 51 per cent of the Zhanjiang terminal, near Shanghai. It has management responsibility in both.

Temps, page 25



Brian Smith, the non-executive chairman of BAA, tries on a new tie at Liberty, the retailer, which opened a store at Heathrow's Terminal Three, owned by the former British Airports Authority. Liberty is keen to build on its reputation for importing exotic and unusual items from around the world, including presents for children, menswear and womenswear. As such, it chose to open at Heathrow's main intercontinental terminal.

## Disposals cut debts at Ascot

By Martin Flanagan

ASCOT Holdings, a property and leisure group that is striving to cut its burden of debt, made two significant disposals. It sold Belhaven Brewery, East Lothian, for £23.5 million and Heywood Business Park, Manchester, for £24.4 million.

The brewery was sold to Belhaven Holdings, a company formed by CVC Capital Partners and Belhaven managers, led by Stuart Ross, the managing director. It was Scotland's biggest management buyout this year. Heywood Business Park went to Burford Holdings, the property group.

The value of the Belhaven sale to Ascot, formerly Control Securities, is £31 million when trade loan guarantees and other debts taken over by Belhaven Holdings are included. Ascot retains a 15 per cent stake in Belhaven Holdings. It has warrants to subscribe for a further 10 per cent.

Belhaven, Scotland's oldest independent brewery, owns 61 pubs and earned profits of £1.7 million in its last trading year.

Ascot's shares were rebuffed in the summer after 18 months of suspension. That had followed the arrest of Nazim Virani, the former chairman and chief executive, on charges related to the BCCI collapse.

## Gas stake bid in Belgium

By Ross Tremain  
Industrial Correspondent

BRITISH Gas has bid for a 50 per cent stake in Distrigaz, the Belgian natural gas group, according to a Reuters report from Belgium.

The Distrigaz stake is the main asset of the Belgian state national investment holding company (NIM/SNI) which is being privatised.

Two other groups are reported to have bid more than 18 billion Belgian francs (£335 million) for NIM/SNI. One is the Belgian holding company Ackermans & Van Haaren; the other, a group of investors around the Belgian financier Johan Vets.

No spokesman from British Gas could be reached for comment. However, such an investment could fit with the company's ambitions to grow overseas to compensate for accelerating competition in Britain's gas market.

British Gas shares continued to fall yesterday, slipping a further 14p to 333p after Tuesday's announcement from Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, that the household gas market is to be opened wide to competition from April 1996.

Although British Gas has agreed to sell its Canadian distribution business, Consumers Gas, the company is developing distribution interests in East Germany, India, and elsewhere.

## Malaysia set to topple UK in pay league

By Ross Tremain  
Industrial Correspondent

SCROOGE-LIKE British executives have been handed the perfect Christmas present by PA Consulting Group.

In its annual survey of international management earnings, PA ranks Britain's bosses at number 19 in a table of 20 countries in the developed world, and suggests that they are rapidly being overtaken by their peers in Malaysia, who came last.

The notion that managers in Britain are worse paid than their counterparts in America, Japan, Germany and other

continental European countries will come as little surprise to anyone who frequently travels overseas on business. But the discovery of Singaporean managers in fifth place should serve as a timely reminder of Britain's slide down the league table of world prosperity.

The figures are, of course, very crude and take no account of tax rates, benefits in kind, or indeed living costs.

The quality of life in Britain, if not the standard of living, may still compare favourably with that achieved by many managers overseas. Besides, sterling's slide over the past 18 months will surely have undermined the nation's standing

in the table. At the same time, the prolonged recession has weakened the pressure for pay rises in Britain, while scarcity of skills in fast-growing economies such as those of Singapore and Malaysia have kept managerial pay there growing apace.

### CONTRACT NOTICE FOR ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PURCHASING SERVICES (PRE-QUALIFICATION)

As part of its market testing programme the Housing Corporation hereby invites companies to apply to provide accounts payable and purchasing services on behalf of the organisation.

The successful company will be expected to take control of accounts payable systems; provide a help desk facility; provide information for the half year and annual accounts preparation; raise invoices; provide accountable cash management systems; manage the Corporation's fixed assets; provide competitive purchase systems on behalf of the Corporation and manage the external distribution of the Housing Corporation's priced and free publications.

To qualify, companies are asked to provide copies of the last three years published accounts; details of the size and scope of contracts held by the company in the last three years in relation to accounting, auditing, book-keeping and procurement; quality management systems the company would employ in such a contract and any accreditations held and details of senior staff to be employed in the management of the contract. Additional information may be requested before tenders are invited or with tender submissions.

The contract will be awarded to the economically most advantageous submission, taking into account (in order of importance):

- skills, experience and resources;
- quality systems;
- cost;
- and any other criteria listed in the tender document.

The tender process is governed by the procedures and timescales dictated by the Official Journal of the European Community, Restricted Procedure notice.

Companies will be expected to bid for all of the requirement. The contract will last three years.

The closing date for applications is 18 January 1994 and the final date for issuing of invitations to tender will be 1 February 1994, a maximum of eight companies will be invited to tender.

Applications should be sent to:

Mr J A McLarnon  
The Housing Corporation  
149 Tottenham Court Road  
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# A good year for shares but not for Lamont and ERM

Anatole Kaletsky looks back over his economic and financial predictions for the past year and finds they include only one out-and-out dud

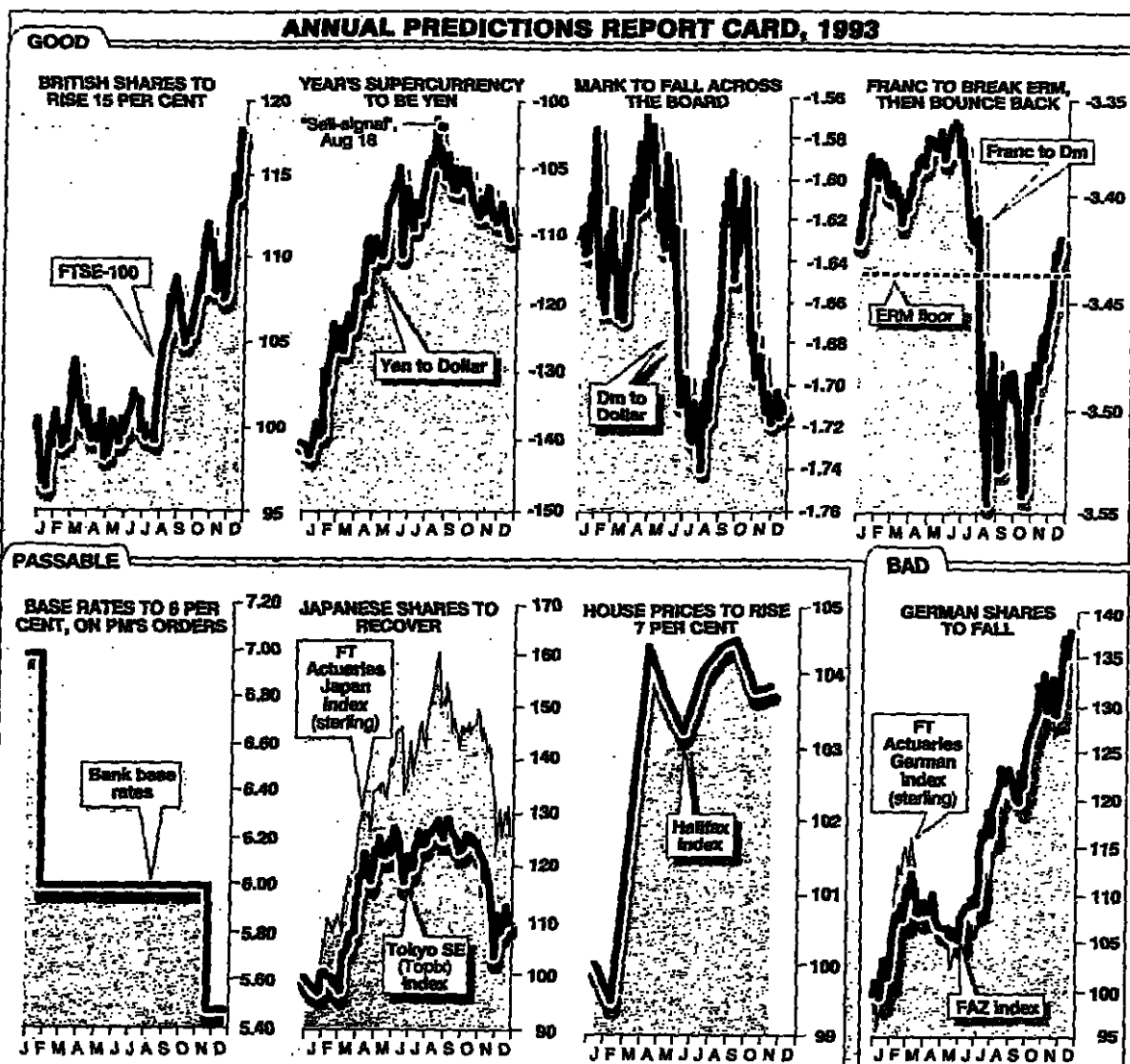
In each of the past three years, I have devoted January's first "Economic View" to a series of financial and economic predictions. On January 5, I will hazard some guesses about next year, but today it is time to review the predictions published last January 4.

I have always tried to avoid forecasts that were too obvious — for example that unemployment would start to fall in 1993. But in 1993 this presented a problem. The mood in Britain had been transformed by the start of the year as people finally realised that the expulsion from the ERM had been a godsend, and the consensus among economists, for a modest economic recovery, seemed, for once, to be about right. To say anything that was not already obvious, therefore, I decided to concentrate on financial markets, rather than mainstream economics. Financial prices, by definition, incorporate investors' average expectations about the future, which means that to guess the direction of the next 12 months' movements is never a trivial task.

There was, however, one economic policy prediction worth making last January. It was obvious that interest rates would fall further from the 7 per cent level I had been lucky enough to predict a year earlier, but forecasting ever-lower interest rates had become a monotonous business. Fortunately, Norman Lamont came to the rescue. In his New Year interview with *The Times*, the then-Chancellor insisted he would not cut interest rates again unless the economy unexpectedly weakened. This gave me the chance to predict that Mr Lamont would prove wrong in forecasting even his own actions. Interest rates would be cut again — and if the Chancellor did not like it, the order for 6 per cent base rates would come directly from the Prime Minister and the Chief Whip. Eventually rates would probably fall even further, I added. The first prediction was realised on January 26, when John Major over-ruled the Treasury and cut base rates to 6 per cent in his celebrated phone call from Delhi. The second part of the prediction was realised on November 24, when base rates were cut to 5.5 per cent.

Unfortunately, I went wrong in adding a rider — that interest rates might rise again towards the end of the year, at least for a while. I have an excuse, though not a justification. The reason I expected interest rates to rise was psychological, not economic. I thought the Treasury would succumb to its sado-masochistic impulses and "seize the chance to return to an economic squeeze, at least temporarily, as soon as it saw clear evidence of recovery". This fear was vindicated by Kenneth Clarke's Budget, but what I did not anticipate was the method — fiscal, rather than monetary, deflation too choke off growth.

The key mistake lay not in misinterpreting Treasury psychology, but in failing to foresee the scale of Britain's fiscal mismanagement. Although I had warned, in November 1992, that the public sector borrowing requirement was reaching unprecedented proportions, I foolishly still believed in the Treasury's fiscal forecasts, which showed a PSBR of around £35 billion for 1993/94. Had I realised the scale of the tax increases the Government would soon demand to pay for its



blunders, I certainly would not have predicted any turnaround in interest rates. That, at least, is my excuse. Now for the financial forecasts. Although there was some concern last year that British shares might be overheating, having gained 25 per cent in the three months after White Wednesday, I felt confident the stock market would move higher. Looking at the history of past devaluations and the ratio between share prices and wages, I suggested the FTSE-100 index would rise by about 15 per cent. Unfortunately, I made an arithmetical error in calculating what this would mean for the FTSE, suggesting a year-end level of "around 3,100", which was only 9 per cent higher than on December 31, 1992. In fact, the arguments I was using implied a FTSE of 3,200 to 3,250. With the FTSE now at 3,340, this prediction has worked out fairly well.

My other successful hunches were on currencies. I said the yen would appreciate against all currencies, including even the dollar, which in turn would strengthen against the mark and the pound. Bullishness on the yen this year delivered spectacular results. It rose from ¥124.83 to the dollar on January 1 to ¥101.08 on 16 August. Better still, I was lucky enough to call the exact peak of this market move, writing on August 19 that bullishness on the yen had "been fulfilled in spades" and warning that there was now a "serious possibility of a sharp reversal in the yen's 25 per cent appreciation against the dollar".

On other currencies, January's expectations were also broadly fulfilled. The mark did "join sterling among the weakest currencies in the world", as predicted. To be precise, it fell by 5 per cent against the dollar, 18 per cent against the yen, 7 per cent against the Swiss franc and 4 per cent against sterling. But much more fun than being broadly right about the yen and mark was forecasting the ERM's breakup. On January 4, as the Bank of

France and the Bundesbank triumphed against the speculators for the second time in three months, I said French membership of the ERM was becoming a bad joke. "The franc will be forced out of the ERM, not because it is overvalued, but because France needs much lower interest rates than Germany," I argued, adding that "soon after the link with Germany is broken, the franc could start to rise against the mark". This strident scepticism about the franc-mark link was definitely a minority view at the time — so much so that it tempted George Soros, the celebrated speculator, into a widely reported exchange of open letters on these pages, which in retrospect marked the beginning of the end of the ERM. Since the ERM bands were formally abandoned, the franc has performed much as predicted — bouncing back against the mark, so that it ends the year almost exactly where it started.

Now for some less successful predictions. The same arguments that made me rightly bullish about British equities, persuaded me that house prices would rise by 7 to 10 per cent this year. In fact, prices did start to recover in February, but the annualised rate of increase has been a paltry 2.8 per cent. Part of my error lay in overestimating wage inflation — at about 5 per cent, instead of the actual 2.8 per cent. But I was also wrong in expecting the ratio of house prices to earnings to start rising immediately towards more normal levels from what I persist in believing is the "incredible bargain" level, on offer today. But more of that on January 5.

My view on Japanese stock prices was also half-right. I said that Japanese shares would rise, along with the yen, because there was nothing wrong with Japan that could not be cured by lower taxes and higher government spending. The reasoning behind this

prediction turned out to be faulty, but not, in my view, because the Japanese economy is fundamentally sick. The problem is simply that corruption scandals have made the government incredibly dilatory about cutting taxes and raising spending. As for the prediction of higher stock prices itself, it turned out to be right. Despite the widespread belief that Japan is in the midst of a financial meltdown, shares in Tokyo have actually risen this year — and although the advance was only 3 per cent on the Nikkei index (seriously distorted by technical changes) it was a decent 11 per cent on the more representative Topix index.

Compared with the market's 25 per cent plunge the previous year and the warnings of financial meltdown from many commentators, this was a perfectly respectable performance. More to the point, the widely followed Tokyo market indices ignore the sensational rise of the yen. In fact, a British investor in the FT-A Japan index would have enjoyed a 32 per cent gain between January 1 and December 17 — much better than the gain in Britain (19 per cent), America (8 per cent) or France (19 per cent) and almost as good as Germany's 33 per cent.

This leads me to my one completely dud prediction. Although I foresaw that Germany would suffer a deep recession and a year of "profound economic disruption", I drew the naive financial conclusion that the German stockmarket would decline. In fact, the exact opposite happened. Germany was the best performing major stockmarket, apart from Hong Kong. Why did I forget the old adage that stockbrokers prosper when everyone else suffers? I cannot remember, but for regular readers I have two excuses. First, that Frankfurt shares were only mentioned in last January's chart and not in the main text. Second, that I firmly expect the German stock market to decline as the economy recovers in 1994. But more of that on January 6.

## TEMPUS

### Leaving Liverpool

LIVERPOOL Bay was the one redeeming feature of Lasmo's expensive bid for Ultramar two years ago and selling even a 5 per cent stake in the shallow water oil and gas field is likely to have occasioned a good deal of pain. Wrapped up in a basket of assets, the price is undisclosed, but even if Lasmo obtained a fair deal from PowerGen, the market would scarcely describe Lasmo, labouring under a submerged oil price, as a willing seller.

With the oil price almost matching last year's production costs, Lasmo needs to cut costs; more disposals are on the cards but the company has few assets as attractive as Liverpool Bay. The market is awaiting a sale of Lasmo's 35 per cent stake in Markham, an offshore field straddling the median line between Britain and Holland, with speculation centering on a price of £100 million for

Lasmo's interest. Markham is a more complex international asset where Lasmo is the operator and there are a smaller number of obvious buyers.

By selling a stake in a prize possession, Lasmo has weakened its position but it has little choice but to accept deals when and where it can get them. Forecasts of the company's losses for the current year vary widely depending on estimates of provisions balanced by write-backs, and on most forecasts for oil prices the losses will continue next year. With virtually no prospect of a dividend and the chance of a rights issue when the new finance director joins next year, share price prospects look bleak, but if the company can survive the next year, and a turn in the oil price, it could become a geared recovery play.

## P&O

IF ONLY P&O could close a few more deals like yesterday's disposal of a 9.5 per cent stake in Modern Terminals Limited in Hong Kong, the City's lingering doubts about its borrowings would vanish for good.

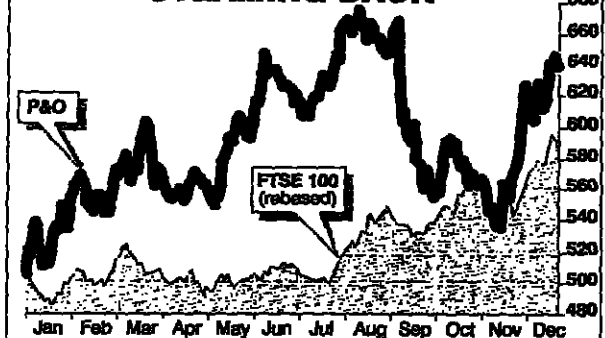
The disposal price reflects the lasting bull market in the Hong Kong industrial property market. At HK\$1.35 billion (£117 million), it is 60 per cent more per share than the group's previous sale of a 9 per cent stake in April 1992 — and this for a little-regarded minority stake that the group bought for just £1.9 million. Strangely, P&O feels obliged to retain its remaining 5 per cent stake as a foothold in the container terminal, despite the cash that could be generated from a sale.

Some of the proceeds have been recycled into two new

container terminals in China, but the rest should cut the group's gearing to 65 per cent at the end of the year. This may not be comfortable but it is certainly more stable than the 80 per cent that it had in January.

Even so, investors would probably appreciate P&O if it raised more cash from asset sales. The group says it could cut borrowings quickly by selling part of its £1.5 billion investment property portfolio. Now would be an appropriate time since the property market has strengthened substantially in the last six months and the best defence the group can offer against Eurotunnel when it opens next year is a robust balance sheet.

## STEAMING BACK



## Coats Viyella

GIVEN the battering the textiles sector has received since Dawson cut its dividend and Courtauld Textiles issued a profit warning, it is understandable to see Coats Viyella trying to put some distance between it and its rivals. Its trading statement read very much as a steady-state-as-it-gets report that did not warrant the 3 per cent market chipped off the share price. That only shows how jittery the City still is about trading updates, no matter how innocuous.

Coats looks to be heading for profits of up to £150 million this year, a decent advance on the £109 million it produced in 1992. The most obvious turnaround is in the Brazilian operations, which turned in astonishing losses for their size last time that have since been successfully neutralised.

Coats has a more international spread than any of the other British textile companies, and its thread operations in particular have dynamics more akin to an industrial components market than consumer products.

The most positive aspect of the group's trading in 1993 is that profits continue to move ahead even though the acquisition provisions from Tootal are becoming exhausted. On-going rationalisation costs are being balanced by profits on property disposals.

The most interesting aspect about Coats is the systematic reduction in borrowings during the year. Gearing is now under 30 per cent following the conversion of the preference shares and the enhanced scrip. This gives it scope for a large acquisition at home or overseas. Coats is by nature a predatory company and with so much of the textile industry looking vulnerable, it could well pounce in the new year.

## Invesco

INVESCO has taken a great deal of flak in the past two years, much of it justified, but the sale of the stake in Oak Industries should be a small crumb of comfort to its long-suffering management and shareholders.

The fund manager never wanted to take a position in Oak but was obliged to dur-

ing the ructions at Drayton Consolidated, the poorly-performing investment trust it managed. It bought a 4.6 per cent stake at \$5 a share in the electrical components company from Boston, Massachusetts and probably did not expect much of a return, as witness the fact that it insisted on paying with an interest-free loan note.

But equity markets are never predictable and Oak's shares have performed astonishingly well. At one point they were as high as \$30, and while Invesco may have missed the top of the market, it can hardly feel disheartened with an exceptional profit of \$5.7 million. Investors in Drayton's successor, the Second Consolidated Trust, should receive a similar turn when it sells out which will sweeten the process of winding the trust down.

Wisely, Invesco is not making a habit of investing on its own account. There are too many potential conflicts of interest in such activity. The sooner Invesco sells its remaining unwanted investment in City Merchants Bank, the happier everyone will be.

## THE TIMES CITY DIARY

### Paris, the city of dreaming fliers

WE HAVE a winner in our Dream Ticket competition, in which readers were invited to guess the ten most popular destinations chosen by British Airways travellers. BA Executive Club members, offered half the air miles they needed to go to one of 350 "dream destinations" around the world, opted overwhelmingly for the romantic cities of Europe. Top spot went to Paris, followed by Venice, Prague and Rome; the original top four. The surprise choices were Nice and Faro, fifth and sixth, which knocked Amsterdam and Jersey down into seventh and eighth place. Geneva came ninth, and Vienna was tenth. New York, an early favourite, slipped out of the top ten, but remained the favourite long-haul choice. The Seychelles was the second most popular intercontinental destination, followed by Bermuda. Sydney, an early favourite, fell out of the running. The ranking is based on the choice of about 115,000 BA Executive Club travellers. Sadly, no *City Diary* reader managed to get the final ten in the right order. The most

successful entry opened was from a reader who listed the top five correctly. The result is a festive windfall for Brian Dudley of Chelmsford, Essex, who wins two Club Europe tickets, courtesy of BA. Thanks to the hundreds of readers who took part.

CONFUSION reigned yesterday after an announcement by Irish Life, when callers were invited to ring a certain Nora Lucy at its head office. Unfortunately, the wrong number was printed, and calls were taken by a rather bewildered Stephen Kemper in his home in Islington, north London.

### Bah! Humbug

SEASONAL goodwill has been in short supply at KPMG Peat Marwick's office at Salisbury Square, London, where incoming senior partner Colin Sharnan will be based from the new year. Through what can only be an unseemly oversight on the part of senior staff, the imposing entrance hall was left bare of a Christmas tree this year. Indeed, there was little to add some festive cheer to the rolling marble floors. Depressed by this sad state of affairs, KPMG's receptionists clubbed together to buy a Christmas

tree to go near their desk — an item that I have not seen, but which has been described to me as the height of a wine bottle stacked on top of a bottle of beer. Some heuristics that found their way to Salisbury Square were duly shipped off to Puddle Dock. Boo!

Meanwhile, Sarah Bemrose, pin-up of KPMG's public relations department, is dreaming of a white Christmas. A design company has sent her a "Make Your Own Snowman" kit — comprising a carrot and two pieces of coal.

### Moves at BZW

TOP level changes at BZW, where Bill Smith, popular head of research, becomes chief executive of UK Equities. Smith, who has been instrumental in signing a wave of new talent to BZW this year, will continue as head of research and also be responsible for UK market making, sales, trading, sales and institutional client liaison. Dick Tapper, head of derivatives trading, additionally becomes head of global equity risk. Both will report to Jonathan Davis, overall head of the equities division. In other job moves, Donald Wasdall is leaving Al-

lied Provincial Securities to set up a new branch for Quilter Goodison in Birmingham, and Vincent O'Brien has been made a director of Montagu Private Equity. He was formerly with Coopers & Lybrand corporate finance.

### To play the voice

Yesterday morning, listeners to LBC Radio were disturbed to hear once again the lethal tones of Francis Urquhart, the scheming prime minister in *To Play the King*, pulling crackers and reading out the ghastly jokes inside, at Chequers presumably. It was, of course, the voice of actor Ian Richardson, who had played Urquhart with such relish, and was now doing a commercial for the bumper Christmas edition of *The Economist*. Jeremy Miles, board director on the magazine's account at advertising agency Abbott Mead Vickers/BDO Limited, admits to capitalising on the BBC serial. "Francis Urquhart has become part of the national psyche. We hoped that voice would make people sit up and take notice." It seems to have done the trick....

JON ASHWORTH

### Lloyd's offer should be accepted

From Mrs B.M. Culverhouse Sir, I refer to the letter from Captain J.N.B. Baillie-Hamilton (December 16) and would like to endorse my strong support for the remarks he makes.

Most names are on several loss-making syndicates and if the settlement offer is not accepted and Gooda Walker and Feltrin go through the courts it is likely that the names of those syndicates may receive more, the lawyers certainly will, but there will be little left in the Errors and

Omissions insurance pot for the other loss-making syndicates.

The other factor to take into account is that many names are elderly and it may be years before all the other action groups get to the courts.

I therefore sincerely hope that Lloyd's offer will be accepted. Yours faithfully, B.M. CULVERHOUSE, Wayside, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

### Ernie losses only to be expected

From L.J. Bishop Sir, Joan Cowper's indignation (Weekend Money letters, December 18), regarding the lack of yield from her £5,000 of Premium Bonds holding, probably arises from a failure to distinguish between the colloquial use of the word "expect" and the mathematical concept of "expectation".

The chance of her not being successful in 13 months is slightly less than 1 in 1,000. I do not know how many people have holdings of a similar amount, but I suspect she will not be alone in failing to notch up a single win.

On the other hand, a few happy investors may have won in every draw. It might be useful in reassuring investors regarding the randomness of "Ernie" if the P.B. office published a statistical analysis comparing outcomes with those which would be predicted. Yours faithfully, L.J. BISHOP, 18 Walsingham Close, Southwell, Notts.

### Personal pensions in perspective

From Mr M.T. S. Pearman Sir, I have been concerned for some years that building societies have been selling endowment mortgages and other financial products with the prime aim of earning commission. When societies are finally forced to pay compensation for selling unsuitable products, it will not be the executives who have been reaping the high rewards who will meet the bill. It will be the investors.

The Building Societies Commission is required by the 1986 Act that it set up to ensure that societies act prudently. It has not done so and continues to stand by while societies continue with their imprudent and unethical activities.

It really is time for the commission to act before the bubble bursts. Yours faithfully, LEN ARROWSMITH, Maes Y Llan, Pen Y Bryn Road, Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd.

Financial vampires

From P.A.D. Dale-Thomas Sir, In recent months, the base rate has been considerably reduced, but have the clearing banks passed this on to borrowers? On the contrary, I was recently informed that the rate for small businesses had been increased from 3 per cent over base to 5 per cent.

Not content with their pound of flesh, the banks now seek to suck our blood as well. Yours faithfully, P.A.D. DALE-THOMAS, Elm Lodge, The Avenue, Taunton, Somerset.

Letters to the Business and Finance section of The Times can be sent by fax to 071-782 5112.











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# EXECUTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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Our client Liberty Communications, owned by Milcom, the international communications company with operations in 17 countries, is shortly to launch a fixed radio based national telecommunications network to compete with BT, offering high quality voice, data, and video services.

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You will negotiate and manage contracts for equipment and service for the network. You should have directly relevant experience from the telecommunications field, be highly numerate, and have good verbal and written communications skills.

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Candidates should be available immediately, so please apply before the new year by sending your CV now to Paul Child at Kramer Westfield Search & Selection, The Old Pound House, London Road, Sunningdale, Berkshire, SL5 0DJ. Tel: 0344 875087. Fax: 0344 874877.

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Castle House, 159 Grenfell Road, Maidenhead, Berks. SL6 1HA.  
(Fax No 0628 782727)

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- Information Builders is among the world's top independent software vendors. • FOCUS-most widely installed Information Systems 4GL
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Benefits include extensive training, an attractive Performance Related Pay scheme (to reflect your individual success in serving our customers' needs), private medical insurance, life assurance and pension. Please apply in writing enclosing an up-to-date CV to Dianne Brady, HR Manager, Information Builders (UK) Ltd, Station House, Harrow Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6DE to be returned no later than 4th January 1994. Positions available in Wembley, London and Warrington, Cheshire. NO AGENCIES PLEASE.

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ESI will be organised along two "product lines": one for software process (e.g. applying the SEI model) and the second one for improvement. Two "Process Managers" will be appointed reporting to the Managing Director, and having full responsibility (e.g. technical, financial, marketing, and staff management).

Successful candidates should have the following key profile:

- Currently in senior management position for software engineering;
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English will be the working language of the Institute.

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## EXECUTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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The Metropolitan Police Service has a value in excess of £1 billion. The Property Services Department is responsible for the provision and maintenance of this estate which comprises a wide range of operational, office, residential, training and specialist buildings.

As head of the Environmental Standards Branch within the Surveying and Engineering Division, you will be responsible for a team of 35 professional, technical and administrative staff who are responsible for the management of energy in the MPS currently costing £12 million pa; for the preparation of environmental engineering and surveying standards; for planned maintenance procedures; for the provision of health and safety advice to the department; and for undertaking specialist inspections (e.g. firing ranges; food hygiene etc.).

The standards and advice you provide must ensure that the estate is maintained to optimum efficiency commensurate with the financial resources available. Accordingly a specialist knowledge and experience at senior management level in one of the above areas of work would be an advantage.

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Closing date for receipt of application forms, which should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae, is 14th January 1994.

Should you be selected for an interview, you may be required to give a short presentation to the Board on a subject which will be notified to you.

We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from suitably qualified individuals.



Employing over 16,000 people, the Metropolitan Police Civil Staff is one of London's largest employers, providing comprehensive and essential administrative, professional, scientific and technical services throughout the capital.

CIVIL STAFF  
PRINCIPAL FACILITIES MANAGER

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Closing date for receipt of application forms, which should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae, is 14th January 1994.

Should you be selected for an interview, you may be required to give a short presentation to the Board on a subject which will be notified to you.

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For a young organisation, Sun Microsystems has a big history. Formed in 1982, our UNIX-based workstations spectacularly changed the face of networked desktop computing and we've enjoyed industry leading growth ever since. We now command the largest share of one of the computer industry's fastest-growing segments, and our pioneering spirit certainly hasn't faded.

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Please write, enclosing a full c.v., to: Les Gill, Human Resources Manager, Sun Microsystems, Bagshot Manor, Green Lane, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5NL.

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Systems  
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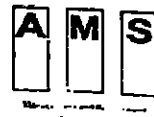
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**THEATRE page 32**  
Peter Pan files again  
at Sadler's Wells,  
courtesy of the Black  
Light Theatre of Prague

# ARTS

**FUNDING page 33**  
Lord Palumbo hits out  
at the "philistines" in  
government who have  
made his job so difficult



**CINEMA: Geoff Brown sees Clint Eastwood put his ego on hold in the Kevin Costner tour de force *A Perfect World***

## Two superstars into one film will go

In theory, putting Clint Eastwood and Kevin Costner into the same film should be like going about town in two bowler hats: good as a stunt, maybe, but a profligate use of resources. In his early sixties, Eastwood can still carry a film unaided, especially with older viewers: while Costner has been busily demonstrating his star power since *No Way Out* and *The Untouchables* six years ago. Put them together in *A Perfect World* and which do you watch? Who do you root for?

The story makes the decision easy. Eastwood, a Texas Ranger, is first seen in Dallas with his feet on a desk, embroiled on the phone. Later he gets out and about, tracking his prey through the state, but the image establishes his subservient role.

Costner, however, with his hair brushed back and cigarette dangling, is action man from the word go. He escapes from prison on Halloween night in 1963, three weeks away from JFK's assassina-



Shooting the shooting. Clint Eastwood dons his director's hat while still wearing his sheriff's stetson, as Kevin Costner plays the renegade in the flawed, but nonetheless impressive *A Perfect World*

**A Perfect World**  
Warner West End  
15.138 mins  
Costner and Eastwood:  
Costner wins

**King of the Hill**  
MGM Shaftesbury  
Avenue, 12.103 mins  
Touching moment of a  
Depression childhood

**Desperate Remedies**  
Warner West End  
15.92 mins  
High camp from  
New Zealand

**Late Spring**  
Renoir, 108 mins  
Ozu's moving  
domestic drama

tion. He kidnaps a seven-year-old boy. He shoots his hothead partner dead in a field. "I ain't a good man," he explains at one point. "I ain't the worst, neither. Just a breed apart."

This is the kind of loner role Eastwood might have played himself 20 years ago: a hardened criminal from a broken home, who finds unlikely companionship with the boy scooped up from a Jehovah's Witness family. "Guys like us, Philip, we gonna be on our own."

As they take to the back roads and elude the law, the inexperienced boy, wonderfully played by T.J. Lowther, comes to treat the taciturn Costner as a surrogate

father. For all the widescreen vistas, the road-movie thrills and spills, *A Perfect World* is at its best when the scale is intimate, one on one.

For his part, Eastwood goes in pursuit with the vim of a weary professional, equipped with a high-tech mobile trailer, three redneck deputies and a silly lady criminologist (Laura Dern) dragged into the script as the female interest. Since Eastwood is also the film's director, the perfunctory nature of his own character must be by design. This is Costner's film, Costner's story, and one of Costner's best performances; you can only admire Eastwood's graciousness in making way.

At the end of the day, though, the blinding star power of *A Perfect World* does bring problems. In theory, John Lee Hancock's script would have packed a greater punch if the film had been shorter, tauter, smaller. With Eastwood and Costner attached, the drama meanders and gets heavily inflated at the end. But nobody should wish them

absent, for without their presence this flawed, thoughtful, almost sombre film — a most curious choice for a Christmas release — might never have been made.

If the name of the director of *King of the Hill* were anything other than Steven Soderbergh, it would probably have received kinder treatment from the critics at Cannes this year. As it was, the air rang out with yawns and sniffs of disdain.

In truth, this richly coloured tale of a plucky 12-year-old warding off the Depression takes the director of *sex, lies and videotape* perilously close to the Hollywood mainstream. But his handling is so sure and tender that you never drown in cliché.

Soderbergh needed to rebuild his career. After the storm of praise for *sex, lies, his second feature* *Kafka*, shot in Prague with Jeremy Irons, was barely released and has still not emerged in Britain. However, with A.E. Hotchner's autobiographical memoir, he has bitten

into something simple, solid and full of resonance.

At the centre is Aaron, living with his family in 1933 in a seedy St Louis hotel, whose wallpaper even caps the hideous decor of the *Barton Fink* hotel. Father (Jeroen Krabbé) scrapes a living selling door-to-door; mother (Lisa Eichhorn) suffers from nerves and consumption. Eventually Aaron must fend for himself against hunger, eviction, and the dangers of a transient hotel.

Alone in his room, Aaron eats an imaginary banquet, covering the plates with illustrations cut from a recipe. Across the hall, Spalding Gray's Mr Mungo, once a man of wealth, nurses his sorrows with alcohol, prostitutes and a cane made of rhinoceros horn. Soderbergh's tapestry of Roosevelt's America comes dipped in nostalgic hues, yet the detail remains vivid, and Jesse Bradford's no-nonsense portrayal of the nimble, imaginative hero keeps the film unsentimental at heart.

Indeed, Aaron proves so spry and observant that you feel he should have been scorched by the crucible of the 1930s and become a great writer. Instead, he grew into Hotchner, Hemingway chum, *Cosmopolitan* scribe, biographer of Doris Day and Sophia Loren: an admirable fellow, no doubt, but hardly the author of that Great American Novel.

The only new release with a touch of the festive spirit is *Desperate Remedies*, and the exhausting gay abandon of this New Zealand film is scarcely to everybody's taste. Excess and artifice rule in a 19th-century colonial setting, a town called Hope where Dorothea, a drapery merchant, lands herself in an emotional stew trying to marry off her opium-addicted sister, courting the despair of her own female companion.

This is a film dressed to kill. The lordly Dorothea (Jennifer Ward-Lealand) goes for scarlet dresses and headscarves; fireside flames echo the colour. Characters conduct

their sexual games through beaded windows, suffocating veils, swirls of mist, and all the other props of fanciful movie melodrama. The talk is high-falutin' ("We are all strangers in this land called love"); the music loud, lush and incessant. Stewart Main and Peter Wells, the two directors, earn high marks for endurance and poaching from the best models, the Visconti of *Senso*, *Sirk* and *Welles*. But they have made a clever stylistic exercise, not a film that lives and breathes. The artifice proves so extreme and unvaried that within 25 minutes I was gasping for fresh air, praying the soundtrack's operatic compost would die down. Camp followers and cutlits excepted, you may need your own desperate remedies: earplugs, or even the exit door.

Quiet returns with *Late Spring*, another highlight of the wonderful Ozu season currently underway (until January 6) at the Renoir Cinema. For newcomers to the Japanese master, this may be a less

immediately attractive film than *Tokyo Story*; the story it tells, about a dutiful daughter who eschews marriage for life with her widowed father, is smaller, slighter, more confined in its settings. Yet *Late Spring*, made in 1949, still conveys a special inner glow that few other directors can create; and it shows perfection in the acting skills of two of Ozu's favourite performers, Chishu Ryu and Setsuko Hara.

Look calmly, look intently, as you see daily life transfigured by Ozu's gaze. A train journey, a bill ride, the heavy breathing of sleep, tomatoes being cut, an apple being peeled: each act takes on an almost religious significance.

This is also a story rooted in time and place. Along the roadside a "Drink Coca-Cola" sign looms, while one of the heroine's maid friends is approvingly compared to Gary Cooper. Ozu was always concerned about the Americanisation of postwar Japan. If you seek pure cinematic bliss over holidays, Ozu is the only answer.

**THEATRE UNDER ATTACK: A lone Serbian playwright tackles the war; a beleaguered English touring company goes to schools**

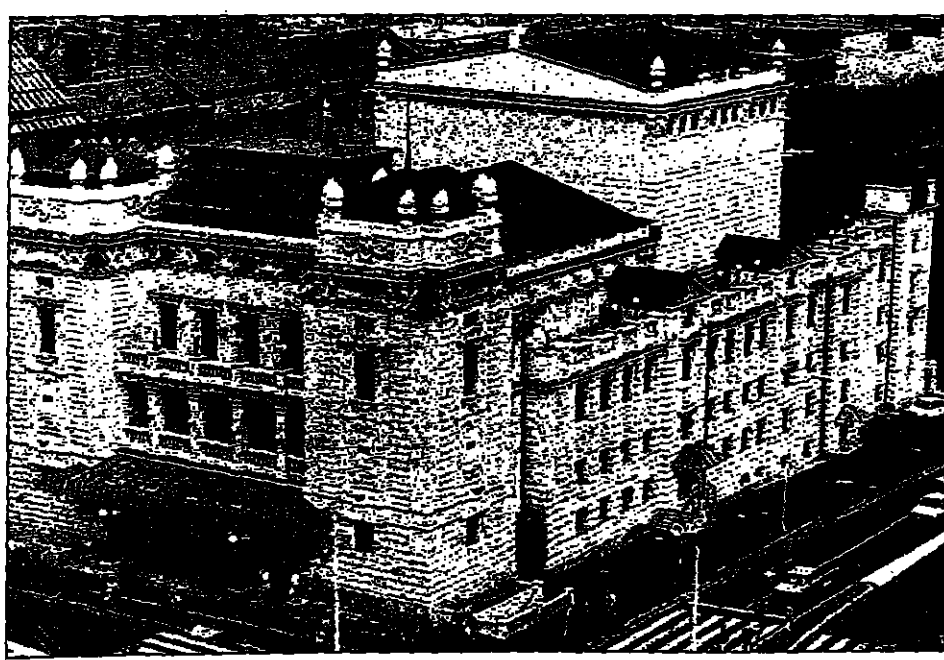
### Fiddling while homes burn

The front is only a few hours away, but Belgrade's theatres are packed. The Serbian capital's middle classes want to laugh, cry or wallow in historical dramas, but even if they cared to they would be unable to see anything about the war on their doorsteps. With one exception. *Dark is the Night*, by Alexander Popovic, Serbia's best-known playwright, has proved a runaway success by touching a raw nerve.

Set in 1991, the play has students demonstrating against President Slobodan Milosevic, but not against the war. A typical middle-class Belgrade family is suddenly plunged into agony because one of the boys receives his call-up papers. Should he go or should he run? Tens of thousands of young men fled Serbia that year rather than fight Croatia but others, such as the play's Manojlo, decided to "do their patriotic duty".

At the front, Manojlo's unit spots something moving in a field. He fires and his leg, which he loses. The cow in the field moves on.

"It's absurd," says Egon Savin, the director. "It's a metaphor for the whole war. The play is a success because much of middle-class Belgrade went through the same dark night in 1991. But *Dark is the Night* only touches on the war. It provides a backdrop for a domestic drama. The



The National Theatre in Belgrade, where houses are always packed but profits slim

play does not take a stand, it only captures a moment in history."

Lazar Stojanovic, playwright and critic, says his colleagues are afraid and confused. "It will be like Vietnam," he says. "Americans only started making serious films about the war ten years after it was all over."

Stojanovic is an anti-war activist. He says that there are no plays that confront Serbia's wars head-on, because playwrights are as susceptible to nationalism as everyone else and just as confused and defensive. Savin says: "If we thought one side was guilty we would have said so. But we don't say that."

Stojanovic compares the situation in Serbia to Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1939. "I feel hopeless. It would be like trying to put on a play in favour of the Jews. People do not want to see that — they are brainwashed."

Directors do not have to wrestle with censorship, but this does not mean that they need not worry about the political content of their plays. Jovan Cirilov, the director of the Yugoslav Drama Theatre, says today's politicians have no interest in drama. However, his theatre, like most big ones, survives on government subsidies, so it would be unwise to bite the hand that feeds it. Directors must also keep a steady eye on the extreme nationalists who have set the Serbian political agenda for the past few years.

When the National Theatre staged a life of St Sava, Serbia's patron saint, it made the mistake of putting on a play about the man rather than a hagiography. St Sava was depicted not only as promiscuous but, to add insult to injury, the play implied that he was bisexual. Violent neo-fascist demonstrators put an end to the production. The

theatre will not make the same mistake again.

Another unpleasant fact of life is that, despite full houses, Serbia's theatres are, like the rest of the country, in a state of financial collapse. Inflation is predicted to hit 250,000 per cent for December alone. Advertisements note that the price of tickets is unknown until purchased. Small theatres like the Cult, where *Dark is the Night* is being staged, convert their nightly takings into black market German marks as soon as possible but, for bigger theatres under stricter financial control, this is more difficult.

Cirilov says he is forced to put his dinar takings into the bank, where their value melts as fast as snowballs on a summer's day. One actress said her monthly salary paid for a taxi home — once a month.

TIM JUDAH

### Survival becomes child's play

Getting children to empathise with Faust, the ultimate gothic moral tale, is not easy. But the audience of 12-year-olds at the Shaw Theatre, in north London, were hooked in the first few moments, when Faust culminated against his academic life: "What do I teach these stupid asses?" he asked, and answered himself (to cheers): "Merely that teaching is absurd."

This is the English Shakespeare Company as it hopes you will get used to it — the company needs £150,000 in sponsorship. The ESC's robust presentation of the classics to audiences aged from eight to 14 has been a hit with both teachers and children. Last week the company mailed information about next year's schools workshops to 7,500 secondary schools, and in three days had 44 bookings.

This *Faust* is not the epic production of Goethe's work that ESC artistic director Michael Bogdanov had planned to tour in the new year, but its children's companion, now the only vestige of a complex touring scheme.

Bogdanov says: "We just had to give back £600,000 on the large-scale tour" — which had been rescued by sponsorship from the tourism magazine Michael Edwards when the Arts Council decided to stump up only £290,000 — "because we haven't got the money to run the company and barnstorm and chuck things at audiences the way we should. But we can do it through the education and community programme."

The ESC is abandoning the large-scale touring it was set up to do, seven years ago by Bogdanov and Michael Per-

nington. Then, with the National and the RSC leaving a gap in robust classical touring productions, the ESC stepped in with the *Henry* series, to unmitigated acclaim.

But, with the Arts Council switching funding arrangements, new competition from the RSC and National for the audiences, and venues being less bold in their guarantees, the numbers have not added up. Last March, the frustrating Arts Council negotiations led to the departure of Pennington. "People think switching to education is a copout, but this is where we truly believe the best work needs to be done now," says Carole Winter, who set up the company's education department three years ago.

Bogdanov has always said that the ESC would have a limited useful life. But he is

bitter at having had to consider its premature demise. Instead, he is redoubling the education effort, unsubsidised. Next year there will be a study of Shakespearean lovers in *Fair Play*; a *Hamlet* adapted for seven to 11-year-olds; the IBM Key Stages company which works alongside teachers in schools; a teachers' development course, and a puppet *Macbeth*.

In its short life the education department has had swift success with its 70 performances a year, as well as workshops and lectures. The audience I joined was not the largest in the ESC's current tour of *The Fantastical Legend of Dr Faust* — just 120 — but it made up for the lack of numbers with vocal response.

In this presentation, Faust inhabits a netherworld of grotesque puppets, sometimes

three times life-size. Since i tour started in September, it production has been seen by 15,000 youngsters, and it rums after Christmas with Lebanon and, possibly, Germany on the itinerary.

The response has been enthusiastic. At Ashton-under-Lyne, Greater Manchester, the show's director, Ken Beales, asked a nine-year-old what he thought of an act making love to a lifesize puppet. "He said it was stupid because the girl was only 14. She is now a more credible 1. In Middlesbrough the child turned the show into pantomime, booing Mephistopheles and cheering it Archangel. "But at the end says Peter Holdaway, w plays Faust, "there was too silence."

SIMON TAI

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Alison Roberts reports on the final press briefing given by a disappointed Lord Palumbo at the end of a true annus horribilis for the Arts Council

## Last lunch for a chastened chairman

So farewell then, Lord Palumbo — or nearly. "At home" for a final press lunch earlier this week, the chairman of the Arts Council, who leaves in March, faced his critics over Christmas pudding. Served by white-gloved waiters and rounded off with cigars, it was a pleasant affair. Nothing, perhaps, betrays the Arts Council's present chairman so much as the manner of his leaving. We may not see his like again: we certainly won't see such hospitality.

Somewhat, in between mouthfuls of fine wine, one found it difficult to muster much pity for the man who has been thoroughly, and sometimes viciously, debunked in the British press

over recent months. (If it is any consolation to the fringe theatre director, bearing the brunt of the Arts Council budget cut, lunch came out of Lord Palumbo's own pocket.) But the chairman was not asking for pity. He was in reflective mood — not apologetic, not angry. It had been a hard year, he said, but he had always been determined not to take things personally. The underlying tone could be described as bitter, however. As he comes to the end of his five-year term (like Sir Norman Fowler, he is leaving to spend more time

with his family, relations between Arts Council and government are clearly at a new low. But relations between the Arts Council and some of its own clients are, if anything, even more strained. Threatened government cuts lay behind the original plans to withdraw funding from two London orchestras, he said. That is an admission, incidentally, which does not tally with past explanation of motives from other Arts Council staff. The threat also bred the abandoned scheme to axe ten regional theatres: it lowered morale



Lord Palumbo, Arts Council chairman: we may not see his like again; we certainly won't see such hospitality

and threw the Arts Council into the front line. Philistine was a word used several times, usually attached to the phrase "Cabinet ministers". Top-table status for the arts was a dream of a generation; but one year after the arts were given a minister of Cabinet status, the Heritage Secretary presided over the first ever cut in arts funding. Lord Palumbo appeared at a loss to explain the council's budget cut. He had harangued and lobbied in private, all to no avail. Why on earth, he mused, did Peter Brooke decide to

give several million pounds to renovate the Albert Memorial, when the National Lottery is about to provide millions for just such schemes? That money could have been spent on arts groups who will not benefit from the lottery, he said. It's a fair point. In the much-criticised visionary style which has marked Lord Palumbo's tenure, he then said that an extra £75 million for the arts could "transform the country". He also had advice for the Royal Opera House. It should abandon its £150 million redevelopment scheme and spend

perhaps £20 million on re-wiring and safety measures. That would leave the way clear for an even more ambitious plan: the construction of a brand new opera house on the South Bank (a dream first revealed by *The Times* back in 1992, and roundly denied at the time). The lack of a national dance house was a scandal and London's architectural heritage needed attention. Lord Palumbo has not been asked to play a part in the distribution of Millennium Fund cash, even though it was his idea in the first place. That admission provoked a sheepish smile, although he does not think that heritage department supremos are "vindictive" — just narrow-minded and shortsighted.

## Diversity is prized in Liverpool

John Russell Taylor is cheered to find a surprising wealth of fine work in traditional media in Britain's premier art competition

Britain is not rich in open, competitive art exhibitions, and most of those it does have are small in scale, or firmly specialised. The John Moores Liverpool Exhibition is the great exception. It has now reached its 18th biennial appearance, and though Sir John Moores himself died in September, his family are determined to keep it going as a memorial to him.

The set-up of the John Moores is simple, the results generally impressive. Entries have to be British paintings, but there are no further limitations. The first prize has now reached £20,000, which works as the purchase price for which the winning painting enters the permanent collection of the Walker Art Gallery, the John Moores' regular home since 1957. Since past prize-winners have included David Hockney, Patrick Heron, Bruce McLean and Richard Hamilton, mostly towards the start of their careers, the gallery is the richer by many fine works, some of which this year are exhibited in a nearby room. There are no prescriptions, or even established preferences, about the styles of paintings favoured. For the last two shows, abstraction has tended to predominate. This year, perhaps surprisingly in view of the known tastes of the people on the judging panel, the show is very largely representational. One of the

jurors told me he doubted whether this reflected the proportions in the open submission, but it certainly represented the jury's perception of where quality and vitality lay.

The variety of style and approach within the work on show offers comforting testimony that, even in this era of installation art, painting — more or less as it has been conceived since the Renaissance — is alive and well and capable of self-renewal.

The winning picture this year is by the Scottish painter Peter Doig, and seems to reflect, like many of his works, his period of residence in Canada. Called *Blotter*, it is a snowy scene which, though Doig notes that it is based on a photograph he took of his brother, is immediately recognisable from its close relationship to his more fanciful work, in its almost obsessive patterning and its distinctive sense of colour. The final effect is certainly not photographic. Elsewhere in the show there is, as might be expected, extensive evidence of photography similarly used as a starting-point, but very few examples of literal photo-realism.

In any case, even the works which are closest to being unashamed transcriptions of photographs seem to have found strategies for lifting the copycat curse. Paul MacArthur's *Noticeboard of lonely-hearts club advertisements* (also a prize-winner)

'Here is evidence that painting is alive and well and capable of self-renewal'



Graham Crowley's *No Such Thing*: one of several works in this year's John Moores Exhibition which adopt a general, painterly form of representation

transcribes the photographs that the lonely offer of themselves in a way which is at once funny and pathetic, and ends up by its skill in overall design and its reliance on the artist's eye to select and distil, in being unquestionably a painting more than a collage or a pastiche.

Others who refer more remotely to photography, like Arturo di Stefano with his *The Studio of Penelope*, keep the camera in its proper place as just another way for the artist to take notes. Quite a number of the artists included go in for a more general, painterly form of representation, as with Lee Macle's *Everlasting Fare-*

wells, a loaded view of a furniture store, or go off firmly into a semi-private fantasy world, as in Graham Crowley's urban landscape *No Such Thing* or John Bellamy's *The Storm*, which reshuffles the familiar furniture of his mind to considerable effect.

Some of the most telling pieces are those that hover on the borders of recognisability, tantalisingly offering yet withholding the evidence of their experiential starting-point. Such are John Virtue's *Landscape No 147*, one of his new series of large black-and-white images of obscure country scenes, or Clement McAleer's *Easter*

*II*, like puffs of coloured smoke in a Battle of Britain sky.

Nor must the wall of real abstraction be totally neglected. In Calum Innes's intimidatingly entitled *C/C/262 exposed olive painting no 9*, for instance, the left hand three-quarters are a sort of pulsating green/brown/black and the right quarter a rich dotted cream. Even here, minimalism is by no means a spent force.

● The John Moores Liverpool Exhibition continues at the Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street, Liverpool, (051 207 0001) Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2-5pm, until January 23

### ARTS BRIEFING

#### Picasso in store

HARVEY NICHOLS, the Knightsbridge emporium, is diversifying into visual art exhibitions this February. To coincide with the Tate Gallery's big new Picasso show, the store is turning over its window displays to the great artist's work — or, more specifically, to the seven women from whom he drew inspiration. The women — Fernande, Eva, Olga, Marie-Thérèse, Dora Maar, Françoise and Jacqueline — will be allotted a window each: "a stylised vignette placing the women in context with the artist's work," says the store. The windows are unveiled on February 1; the Tate's show opens on February 16.

● SEVEN new films are lined up for what is billed as the first official Australian film festival ever held in Britain — at the Barbican in the last week of March. The highlight may be Kevin Lucas's "avant-garde opera" film, *Black River*, such old favourites as *Stichel Ballroom* and *The Piano* are also included in the week, which is backed by the Australian Film Commission and Posters Export.

#### Last chance...

AFTER 12 years, the Christmas showing of "The Illustrators" at the Chris Beetles Gallery (071-639 7551) has become a major event. The central thread this year is that most of the 800 originals relate to the theatre. A perfect holiday outing; it runs until the end of December.

REVIEWS: Baroque delights on the South Bank; a lively mix of jazz and blues in Camden; plus dance in Paris

There is something both reassuring and disconcerting about encountering familiar music in a new guise. Bach's Cantata "Hercules auf dem Scheidewege" BWV 213 may be one of his lesser known ones, but all five arias and one of the two choruses are very familiar — at least to those who know their Christmas Oratorio.

It is an example of Bach's so-called "parody" technique, and as we were able to hear in the excellent performance by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Gustav Leonhardt, Bach was a master at recycling material, even as in this case from a secular context to a sacred one.

In the "Hercules" Cantata, the hero is confronted by the twin imperatives of Sensuality and Virtue. The former tries to entice him with the delights of sleep and does so in the aria we know as "Slumber, Be-

#### Bach to familiar sounds

OAE/Leonhardt  
Festival Hall

loved" from the Oratorio. Barbara Bonney's boyish tone, though shaped with delicacy and artistry, did not make it sound as enchanting as it should, perhaps because it was rather low in her register. The aria "Ich will dich nicht hören" for Hercules himself has an immediacy lacking in its counterpart in the Oratorio, where it is set to the words "Prepare thyself, Zion". As the

countertenor Ralf Pöppken and Leonhardt took delight in demonstrating, Hercules's denial of sensual pleasures has a forcefully graphic quality in the original version. Paul Agnew and David Wilson-Johnson also contributed admirable solo roles.

Despite the attempt by Wilson-Johnson and Bonney to inject a touch of humour into the father-and-daughter relationship of Bach's "Coffee" Cantata BWV 211, it came across as a rather earnest affair: espresso rather than cappuccino. But how well Leonhardt understands this music. As he propels it forward with those circular sweeps of his arms, it is as though the whole concept of movement which underpins the Baroque aesthetic is flowing through them.

BARRY MILLINGTON

#### A case of fine detective work

L'Ombre  
Palais des Congrès,  
Paris

Like an Hercule Poirot of choreography, Pierre Lacotte's enthusiasm for 19th-century ballet has led him in search of many long-lost works. Although his dream of opening a drawer and confronting Saint-Léon's notations of all his masterworks remains unrealised, he has applied his grey cells to innumerable clues and produced his own evocation of half a dozen once famous ballets, of which Taglioni's original *La Sylphide* is the best known.

Now he has turned his hand to another of the ballets in which the illustrious Marie Taglioni triumphed: *L'Ombre*, created in St Petersburg in 1839. But whereas he found much evidence about the details of *La Sylphide*, this time he has had to make a more imaginative reconstruction. Staged for the Ballet Nationale de Nancy et de Lorraine, which Lacotte directs, its chief merit is showing the qualities of its dancers. At the premiere in Nancy, these were led by Noëlla Pontois as guest ballerina; now they have brought it to Paris where another guest star, Alessandra Ferri, is sharing the performances with Pontois and the company's own young leading woman, Amaya Iglesias.

In its plot, *L'Ombre* foreshadows many details of *La Bayadère*: a heroine murdered by a rival of royal blood, the poison hidden in a bouquet of flowers; her ghost (the "shade" of the title) returning to tell her lover of this crime; a climax where the palace collapses, killing all its occupants. But the structure is less strong: Act 1 is built around a flashback,

not easy to make clear in ballet, and the score which Michel Guenard has adapted from Maeter's original, although pretty, is not distinguished. On the other hand, Lacotte, as his own designer, has found an ingenious way of presenting the destruction of the palace, its towers cracking and falling.

His choreography is a pastiche which looks more convincing in its evocation of romantic style for the ballerina than in the ensembles which seem to take account of modern tastes for display. However, the standard of dancing is good enough to make this acceptable.

Pontois, at almost 50, remains one of France's finest dancers: a ballerina of pure delicacy in technique and style. Gentle in manner but exact in movement, she brings a sylphlike lightness and clear expressiveness to the role of Angelica. Her slight build and dark hair are well set off by her partner, André Fedorov, who is tall, with ruddy hair and a classic line controlling his impressive strength. Amaya Iglesias, the company's resident star, has a bi-the confidence, a radiant personality and a dramatic quality. When not dancing Angelica she plays the rival, Eudocia, a part in which she does not look overshadowed by Pontois.

JOHN PERCIVAL

#### Promise of a good time

A.J. Croce  
Jazz Café, NW1

The publicity people are hinting that A.J. Croce, piano-playing son of the Seventies singer-songwriter Jim Croce, could be the next Harry Connick Jr. Given his clean-cut looks, his sharp suits and those deep, dark eyes it is easy to see why. Croce, though, does not yet even begin to compete in the charisma stakes, and while he has a predilection for the music of the pre-war years, he is more interested in digging up obscure R&B gems than singing standards.

Leading his good-time band into the bleak concrete and steel setting of the Jazz Café, the place still feels only half-finished — he played a single 90-minute set which drew heavily on his debut album, released earlier this year on

BMG's Private Music label. Two short sets might have been a better idea, since Croce tends not to project much in the way of personality, preferring to reel out the songs in quick succession.

His piano-playing is astonishingly mature, however, the left-hand producing all the variety of boogie and New Orleans rhythms. He was also capable of slipping into a lighter but no less propulsive Basie-style groove, sprinkling a laconic series of riffs from the right hand.

As a singer he owes something to the drawing, bar-room style of Dr John, his

voice sounding as if it has been soaked overnight in bourbon and then given a heavy coating of cigarette smoke. The lyrics sometimes suffer as a result, the words twisted into barely recognisable shapes, which is a pity, because Croce is a promising writer who has spent time in Nashville honing his skills.

The strongest performances came on the cover versions of "Suñi You Gotta Watch" and "Minnie and Joe McCoy's" "She Wouldn't Give Me None". Croce's own work does not yet reach those standards, but there is enough quality craftsmanship in the elegiac "Which Way Steinway" and "I Found Faith" to suggest that time is all he needs.

CLIVE DAVIS

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# The gospel according to the sceptics

Piers Paul Read on the biblical scholars who hope to reveal the existence of a left-wing, politically correct Jesus from their research

Towards the end of the 19th century, Friedrich Nietzsche announced that God was dead, but more than a hundred years later sceptical scholars still pick at the corpse with great zeal as if the faith of the remaining believers stands or falls on, say, whether or not Jesus was born in Bethlehem on December 25, AD 0.

"Luke's story is historically impossible and internally incoherent," we were told by the erudite historian Robin Lane Fox in his book *The Unauthorized Version: Truth and Fiction in the Bible*; and E.P. Sanders in this new work, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, concurs.

"Luke's real source for the view that Jesus was born in Bethlehem was almost certainly the conviction that Jesus fulfilled a hope that someday a descendant of David would arise to save Israel."

Much praised for his earlier work *Jesus and Judaism*, Sanders softens up the reader with his tone of measured common sense. "Virtually everyone," he tells us, "has his or her own view of Jesus, and thus has a preconception of what a book on Jesus should say."

No doubt, the pious hagiography of Christian writers has been replaced in recent years by the work of iconoclastic scholars like Geza Vermes and Hyam Maccoby.

Is Sanders an exception? To the suspicious reader, he seems too eager to be politically correct, avoiding possible offence to Jewish or Islamic

THE HISTORICAL FIGURE OF JESUS  
By E.P. Sanders  
Allen Lane, £18.99

A QUEST FOR THE POST-HISTORICAL JESUS  
By William Hamilton  
SCM Press, £14.95

sensibilities by dating events BCE (Before the Common Era) rather than BC (Before Christ), and making a ritual obeisance to the feminists: "history was then, as for centuries before and after, the history of males... an odd judgment for a scriptural scholar when you think of the formidable women in the Bible from Eve to the Virgin Mary."

The difficulty Sanders faces, and readily admits, is that almost the only evidence about Jesus comes from the gospels which were written to put across a particular point of view.

He believes "the gospels as we have them were not written by eyewitnesses on the basis of first-hand knowledge" even though Robin Lane Fox, whom Sanders describes as an "eminent ancient historian", considers that St John's account of Christ's passion was almost certainly written by someone who was there.

The only other significant references to Christ are in Josephus's *Antiquities* and *Jewish War*, passages that are themselves the subject of controversy. Sanders nevertheless

assures us that we have a "very good knowledge of Jesus at a somewhat general level" and comes up with a portrait that is tentative and so somewhat bland.

It will come as a disappointment to the zealots of liberation theology that, in considering what Jesus meant by a Kingdom of God, Sanders finds "no evidence at all for the view that individuals can get together with others and create the kingdom by reforming social, religious and political institutions."

On two other controversial questions, he is less clear. Did Jesus perform miracles? Unquestionably he was a healer, and he was certainly perceived by some as a miracle worker, but "possibly Jesus's actual miracles were relatively minor and excited the public only temporarily..." It was the Christian tradition that "augmented and enhanced the miracle stories in order to make them very striking."

Did Jesus claim to be the Messiah? Sanders thinks not. He prefers the term "viceroi" for Jesus's conception of himself. God was king, but Jesus represented him and would represent him in the coming kingdom. "The evidence is that he rejected the title 'Messiah'..."

An amateur exegete hesitates to take a professional to task, and the confessed Catholic is in a sense disqualified from doing so by the preconception Sanders considers to



Titian's religious masterpiece, *Madonna in Glory with the Christ Child and Saints*, was completed in 1520 for the church of San Francesco in Ancona

be an inevitable consequence of his beliefs. It nevertheless seems odd to say that Jesus's miracles made no great impact when it was precisely for the miracles that he was remembered by Josephus when writing his *Jewish War* a generation later ("His actions, certainly, were superhuman, for he worked such wonderful and amazing miracles...").

It is also strange that in considering the question of whether or not Jesus claimed to be the Messiah he should not examine his answer to the Samaritan woman in John 4:25-26: "I know that Messiah—that is, Christ—is coming

... 'I who am speaking to you, I am he'." William Hamilton quotes Sanders's confident statement that "the Gospels were not written to answer our questions" in *A Quest for the Post-Historical Jesus*.

Hamilton himself might be described as a post-historical Christian, "both a believer and an unbeliever..." who agrees with Salman Rushdie that the great religions are now engaged in the task of keeping us from religion, and considers "that Christianity is not so much at a crossroads as at a dead end."

Hamilton's solution is not to

redirect but to redefine Christianity by deciding that since the gospels are fictions we should turn from the theologians to the poets who realise that "truth is more likely to be made than found". By poets he means anyone who has used Jesus as a character in fiction from the authors of the apocryphal gospels to Gore Vidal.

The bulk of his book is an analysis of these mostly mediocre works, some by otherwise talented writers such as William Faulkner and Anthony Burgess. He describes Vidal's *Live from Golgotha* as a "charming and useful polemic narrative" but feels that

A.N. Wilson's "self contradictions are really too much to take." Anglo-Catholics like Dorothy L. Sayers and Roman Catholics like François Mauriac and Shusako Endo are anachronisms: their Christ is "Chalcedonian", and Mauriac is guilty of a "deep and abiding hatred of the Jews" because he draws on St John's "anti-Semitic" Gospel. Hamilton also pours scorn on Mauriac's esteem for chastity: "Jesus's greatest achievement—the nun."

Hamilton ends his *Quest for the Post-Historical Jesus* with a "fiction" of his own. "I suppose I have cherished a

secret hope that you might turn out to be a gentle left-wing revolutionary, correct on women and the environment..." to which Christ replies in the words of Sanders: "Remember, I did not come into the first century to settle your 20th-century problems."

Such a conclusion is both sad and false to those who have not only gained solace from their faith in Christ but recognise the distress of a society that has abandoned Christian values.

The occupational hazard for the biblical scholar is that he often fails to see the wood for the trees.

Daniel Johnson recalls a great cultural historian whose view of the late middle ages is still topical

In the history of human civilisation, all cultures seem to pass through similar phases of vernal growth and autumnal decomposition. Among the most profound thinkers to have reflected on this phenomenon was the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, who died nearly 50 years ago, but whose writings remain as fresh and controversial as ever.

Born in 1872, Huizinga held chairs in history, first at Groningen and then, from 1915, at Leiden, and he wrote on many subjects; but his name will always be associated above all with one book, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (Penguin, £7.99). It was first published in 1919, a year in which the pre-war European order had fallen apart, and, in relatively quiet corners such as Holland, thoughts turned to the collapse of past civilisations. Oswald Spengler's magisterial philosophy of history, *The Decline of the West*, was all the rage. Spengler saw each culture as an isolated organism, doomed to die without progeny, and he believed that modern western culture was no exception.

Unlike Spengler, Huizinga is still influential in many branches of scholarship. The Dutchman was more modest than the German: he took only one part of a single culture, northern France and Flanders in the late middle ages, and sought to understand how it had declined. He was not, of course, the first to do so. Ever since the romantics rediscovered the allure of medieval culture around 1800, countless historians have investigated the process by which the modern mentality—rational, secular, innovative—superceded the theocentric, hieratic cosmos that had held sway for so many centuries before.

Huizinga described the moment around 1907 when, while on a Sunday walk, "the notion came to me that the late middle ages were not the herald of something that was to come, but the fading away of something that had already passed." In *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, which emerged more than a decade later, Huizinga tried to show how late medieval societies in Flanders and Burgundy refined

and elaborated their courtly and chivalric art and ritual. Gothic architecture and religiosity, to the point at which their forms were emptied of substance. An obsession with death and putrefaction was the mark of incipient secularisation, and signalled the end of the age of faith. Even the vivid naturalism and devotion to detail of the great Flemish artists such as the van Eycks were seen by Huizinga as subtly flawed, proof that the harmonious vision of the 12th and 13th centuries was no longer within reach.

Two new books have recently subjected Huizinga's theory of cultural decline to a critical reappraisal. In his treatise, *History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (Yale University Press, £29.95), the professor of art history at Oxford, Francis Haskell, devotes a long chapter to Huizinga and the "Flemish Renaissance", while the Cambridge medievalist and director of the early music ensemble Gothic Voices, Christopher Page, writes about "Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* and the Chanson" in a valuable collection of essays entitled *Disappearing Images: Reflections on Music and Culture in Medieval France* (Clarendon Press, Oxford £25).

Haskell shows that Huizinga had been profoundly impressed by an important exhibition of early Flemish art held in Bruges in 1902. It was this revelation of the riches of the late middle ages that diverted him away from a career in linguistics or as an orientalist—though he was to return to these early interests in his late masterpiece, *Homo Ludens*. Huizinga asked himself instead how the Burgundian court culture—in reality nourished by the prosperity of the Flemish and Brabant towns—believed itself to be based upon knighthood.

Huizinga's emphasis on art as the expression of civilisation as a whole was fundamental to his brand of history. From this primarily aesthetic standpoint, Huizinga picked out those aspects of the late medieval culture in Flanders which seemed to him to capture its strangeness, its utter remoteness from the present



Jan van Eyck's art was seen by Huizinga as realist only in form, not in spirit, hence as one of many aspects of the "waning of the middle ages" in northern Europe

despite the semblance of familiarity conveyed by van Eyck's stark realism. *The Waning of the Middle Ages* opens with an insight—the extremity of medieval antitheses—from which the rest of the book grows, and which has justly become famous:

"To the world when it was half a thousand years younger, the outlines of all things seemed more clearly marked than to us. The contrast between suffering and joy, between adversity and happiness, appeared more striking."

As Christopher Page points out, there is an undertone of something like romanticism about Huizinga, who was reacting against a positivistic specialisation of history which

is even more marked today. But Huizinga's romanticism was self-critical. Haskell quotes Huizinga himself on the way in which attitudes to the medieval epoch had changed between the early 19th century and his own time, "due less to a weakening of the romantic sense than to the substitution of artistic for intellectual appreciation". Pictures, monuments and primarily sacerdotal artefacts have survived, and it is these rather than literary sources that, in the 20th century, determine our conception of the past. Huizinga used these sources, but not uncritically.

For him, the dissemination of medieval art through reproductions and museums car-

ried dangers: "The aspect of mere cruelty and misery as conceived by romanticism, which derived its information chiefly from the chronicles, would have made room for a vision of pure and naive beauty, of religious fervour and profound mystical peace." Huizinga was formidably erudite, but his books rely for their effect on a reconstruction of experience, an accumulation of highly selective, qualitative impressions—sights, sounds, smells. This effective technique of recreating the sense data of a past epoch is, however, subordinated to the historian's essentially subjective judgment.

Huizinga's evocation of a tangible, visible though inconceivably distant past is part of his argument about how and why medieval civilisation declined. That argument depends on abstract categories: lack of harmony, vulgarity, rigidity, over-elaboration, formalism. Without applying these categories, Huizinga could not have postulated that "crystallising tendency" of thought which he noticed in all aspects of the mentality of the declining Middle Ages.

Haskell observes that Huizinga was less interested in analysing the images painted by Flemish artists than in their "stylistic incongruities", the involuntary signposts to cultural decay. But stylistic incongruity is a matter of taste. Huizinga, says Haskell, "doubts whether the notion of aesthetic quality could have had much meaning in 15th-century Flanders; but in doing this he naturally has to rely on his own standards of judgment."

While he did not accord great importance to the study of iconography, as present-day art historians are inclined to do, he nevertheless saw symbolism as a vital part of medieval civilisation, and its degeneration into "a meaningless intellectual pastime" as a catalyst of decline.

Huizinga's critical evaluation of late medieval symbolism has prejudiced the perception of that period's chivalric and courtly culture, and Christopher Page's essay is primarily concerned to free the music of the period from these negative assumptions.

Drawing on the wealth of recent research which has deepened our understanding of later chivalric orders and traditions, Page shows that writers on the 15th-century chansons have underestimated their quality and originality, seeing these polyphonic love songs as typical examples of Huizinga's "crystallising tendency". Modern academics, he believes, have assumed, with Huizinga, that opulence and display are to be equated with decadence. Page takes them to task for their puritanical attitude to an aristocratic culture.

The mere fact that Huizinga's legacy is still debated by scholars of the stature of Haskell and Page is proof of the enduring anxiety that our culture, too, is in decline. In his day, as in our own, the air was thick with lament for past glories and cynicism about contemporary achievements. Huizinga was not aloof from these debates. In 1936 he published a tract for the times, *In the Shadow of Tomorrow*, which begins: "We are living in a demented world."

Huizinga was posthumously denounced by the other great Dutch historian of his day, Pieter Geyl, for his "obsession with decline and ruin and the rancour against his own time". George Steiner has defended Huizinga against Geyl: at least Huizinga, says Steiner, "has the courtesy of his pessimistic convictions".

Huizinga himself denied being a pessimist; he never despaired of the future. But he was certainly sceptical about the possibility of writing a satisfying history about the catastrophic events of the 20th century.

In 1941 he wrote an essay, "On a change on the form of history", which argued that there had been a loss of clear outlines in recent historical events, an absence of the dramatic and the picturesque scenes which had once given historians their cue. He concluded: "The once so flourishing tree on which the fruits of history ripened seems to be condemned to wither away." He left open the possibility that a future generation could begin again to write history books that were not "formless". Whether it ever would, "we do not know."

## Resurrection of holy writ

J. Enoch Powell

A HISTORY OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE  
By Angel Saez-Badillos  
Cambridge University Press, £24.95

From the fascination of Hebrew there is, for the modern European, no escaping. What we think is what we can say; and we think in the way in which we can say it. Greek is the language of the Christian scriptures; nor are earlier forms of those scriptures in Hebrew more than a product of conjecture. What is not a matter of conjecture is that, wherever and whenever those scriptures originated, the minds of those who created them were steeped in the contents of the Hebrew Bible.

The enquirer who wants to trace the history of the Hebrew language is confronted with a terrific fact. It is the language of a book, Angel Saez-Badillos, the Spanish professor who has attempted to satisfy such an enquirer, divides the history of Hebrew into four periods. The first is biblical Hebrew, in which the sacred scriptures were consolidated after the Jews returned in the fifth century BC from their Babylonian exile. The second is rabbinical Hebrew, in which, after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the rabbis created an immense literature of biblical exposition and elaboration. The third is medieval Hebrew, in which the Jewish people prolonged through the oppression of the Middle Ages their traditional belief and learning. And the fourth is modern Hebrew, the official and popular language of the state of Israel.

Through all those phases Hebrew remains miraculously a single entity. "The fundamental unity of Hebrew, both its language and its literature," the historian is obliged to conclude, "is beyond doubt."

Yes, it began as just one dialect among many of the languages of Palestine. What then stamped it and singled it out with its outstanding unity—not to say, its eternity? If we are to be candid, we have to answer: two immense catastrophes, each of them the capture and destruction of Jerusalem. The first was the capture and destruction of the city by the Babylonians in 587 BC and the exile which followed.

The second catastrophe was the capture and destruction of the city and the temple by Rome in 70 AD,

which made the possessors of the Hebrew Bible a people uprooted from their homeland.

Ten centuries ago the Jews of Spain were fully aware of this, as demonstrated by the words of some Cordoban scholars: "Had we not left our country as exiles, we should today possess the whole of our language as in former times." The approximately 8,000 lexical items preserved in the books of the Bible would not have been enough to meet the needs of a living language.

These catastrophes arrested the development of the language. "The exile," notes the historian, "marks the disappearance of this language from everyday life and its subsequent use for literary and liturgical purposes only." Not even Latin, the defunct language of that Roman Empire from which modern Europe arose, presents a parallel.

A glance at any Hebrew Bible reveals another cause of the stability of biblical Hebrew. "Vocalisation systems and various traditions of reading the biblical text had been fixed and then transmitted orally many centuries before it was felt necessary to embody it in graphic notation."

The Greeks of Alexandria were specially fascinated by the accentuation of Hebrew, and it is a fair bet that, without the influence of the Hebrew Bible we would not be familiar with that thoroughgoing accentuation of Greek texts which has become conventional.

It is unfortunate that this book, which takes for granted a detailed knowledge of Hebrew philology, is not aimed at the general reader. One may be permitted to hope that the theme of the Hebrew language and its 3,000-year history may one day be taken up as the subject of a book that can be appreciated and enjoyed as widely as the topic deserves.

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# England A wait on Bicknell's rib injury

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN CAPE TOWN

THE old order is changing in South Africa. But the change has been relatively peaceful in the Cape, which is traditionally more tolerant than other parts of a country where life can be horrifically cheap.

T. S. Eliot, describing *The Journey of the Magi*, the most appropriate poem in Christmas week, wrote that this was "just the worst time of the year for a journey, and such a long journey". The poem ends with the sage "no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, with an alien people clenching their gods".

Things are not quite like that in Cape Town. The latest opinion poll in the Western Cape gives the National Party a slight lead, but it is undeniable that, after the elections in April, life will never again be the same.

Usually, sport plays a secondary role, if that, in shaping society. It is not important in the sense that housing, education and social welfare are, and nor should it be. It is precisely when sportsmen get above their station that sport forfeits its reason to exist.

In this abnormal society, though, sport and, more specifically, cricket, is making an unusually important contribution to social integration that rugby, the white man's game, cannot hope to. But as a country changes, day by day, cricketers are assisting the advance towards normality.

Cape Town has associations for English cricket-lovers beyond the usual boundaries. It is 33 years since John Arlott persuaded John Kay, at Middleton, that he knew a Cape Coloured good enough to do a professional's job in the Central Lancashire League. He then wrote to Basil D'Oliveira: "Come over now, you may never get another chance."

Within a year, he was followed to England by Cec Abrahams, whose eldest son, John, captained Lancashire 20 years later. D'Oliveira and Abrahams Jr have returned to South Africa since its re-introduction to world cricket, the former "to have a look around", as it were, and Abrahams as coach to the England Under-17s.

England A are the ambassadors today when they venture into Langa, a township no more than five miles from the centre of Cape Town, to meet a Western Province Invitation XI. It is a role, which, as Bob Bennett stressed at a British Consulate reception on Tuesday, they take seriously and competitively. It is a pity that some of the invitations thus far have been issued by a pretty glad hand.

After a break for Christmas, the proper cricket resumes at Newlands on Sunday with the third four-day match of the tour, against Western Province. Hugh Morris, who hands over the captaincy to Alan Wells today, while he rests his swollen knee, intends to return for that game.

Morris took no part in the net session yesterday which was cut short after an hour before the day-night game between Western Province and Northern Transvaal. Martin Bicknell will play his first game for two weeks today if he feels his ribs are up to it.

Bicknell, who broke down with a rib injury in practice before the match against Eastern Province Invitation XI eight days ago, is hoping the soft tissue injury treated by an orthopaedic specialist in Port Elizabeth has healed. Bicknell will not be risked if Wayne Morton, the England A physiotherapist, believes there is still cause for concern.



The unfancied Trinkl zigzags his way to success in the men's super-giant slalom in Lech yesterday

## Trinkl turns form upside down

HANNES Trinkl, of Austria, left skiing's biggest names trailing as he swept to his first World Cup win in the men's super-giant slalom race in Lech yesterday.

Trinkl, among the unfancied racers with start No 51, shot down the 1.7km Kriegerhorn piste in 1min 44.2sec. Another late starter, Werner Perathoner, of Italy, had set the pace with 1min 05.02sec from 41st position in the order.

Driving snow and a steady wind eased after the first 15 minutes, favouring competitors like Trinkl as he attacked the 30 gates of the 460 metres drop. Kjell Aamodt, of Norway, came eighth and gained first place in the overall championship from the absent Italian showman, Alberto Tomba.

Trinkl's previous best World Cup efforts were third in two downhill last

season. The Olympic champion, Patrick Ortlieb, failed to finish.

In the women's World Cup super-giant slalom in Flachau yesterday, Katja Koren, 18, a student from Slovenia, cut short the premature victory celebrations of Bibiana Perez, of Italy, by taking the verdict.

Starting 66th out of 86, Koren triumphed in 1min 15.62sec, pushing Perez into second place after she appeared to have clocked an unbeatable 1min 15.70sec.

Katja Seizinger, of Germany, second until Koren's blistering run, was pushed down to third place with a time of 1min 15.87sec on the 1.53-kilometre Griesenkamp course with a vertical drop of 480 metres, marked with 34 gates.

The icy course with alternating sun and shade became faster as the race went

on and Koren's team-mate, Alenka Dovzan, caused the first surprise as she finished fifth from 62nd position in 1min 16.95sec, behind Morena Gallizio, of Italy, who recorded 1min 16.28sec.

RESULTS: Men's super-giant slalom: 1. H Trinkl (Austria) 1:44.2; 2. W Perathoner (Italy) 1:05.02; 3. A Assinger (Austria) 1:05.10; 4. M Wiesinger (Germany) 1:05.20; 5. J. G. G. (Austria) 1:05.27; 6. A. S. (Austria) 1:05.28; 7. J. L. (Austria) 1:05.34; 8. K. A. (Austria) 1:05.36; 9. J. P. (Austria) 1:05.40; 10. H. K. (Austria) 1:05.42; 11. J. M. (Austria) 1:05.46; 12. J. K. (Austria) 1:05.53; 13. A. F. (Austria) 1:05.52; 14. J. E. (Austria) 1:05.53; 15. J. M. (Austria) 1:05.54; 16. J. E. (Austria) 1:05.55; 17. J. M. (Austria) 1:05.56; 18. J. E. (Austria) 1:05.57; 19. J. M. (Austria) 1:05.58; 20. J. E. (Austria) 1:05.59; 21. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.00; 22. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.01; 23. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.02; 24. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.03; 25. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.04; 26. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.05; 27. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.06; 28. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.07; 29. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.08; 30. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.09; 31. J. M. (Austria) 1:06.10; 32. J. E. (Austria) 1:06.11; 33. J. M. 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# Mud flies over drug-testing fiasco

Andrew Longmore on how a British speedway champion was wrongly accused in a case that is of international concern

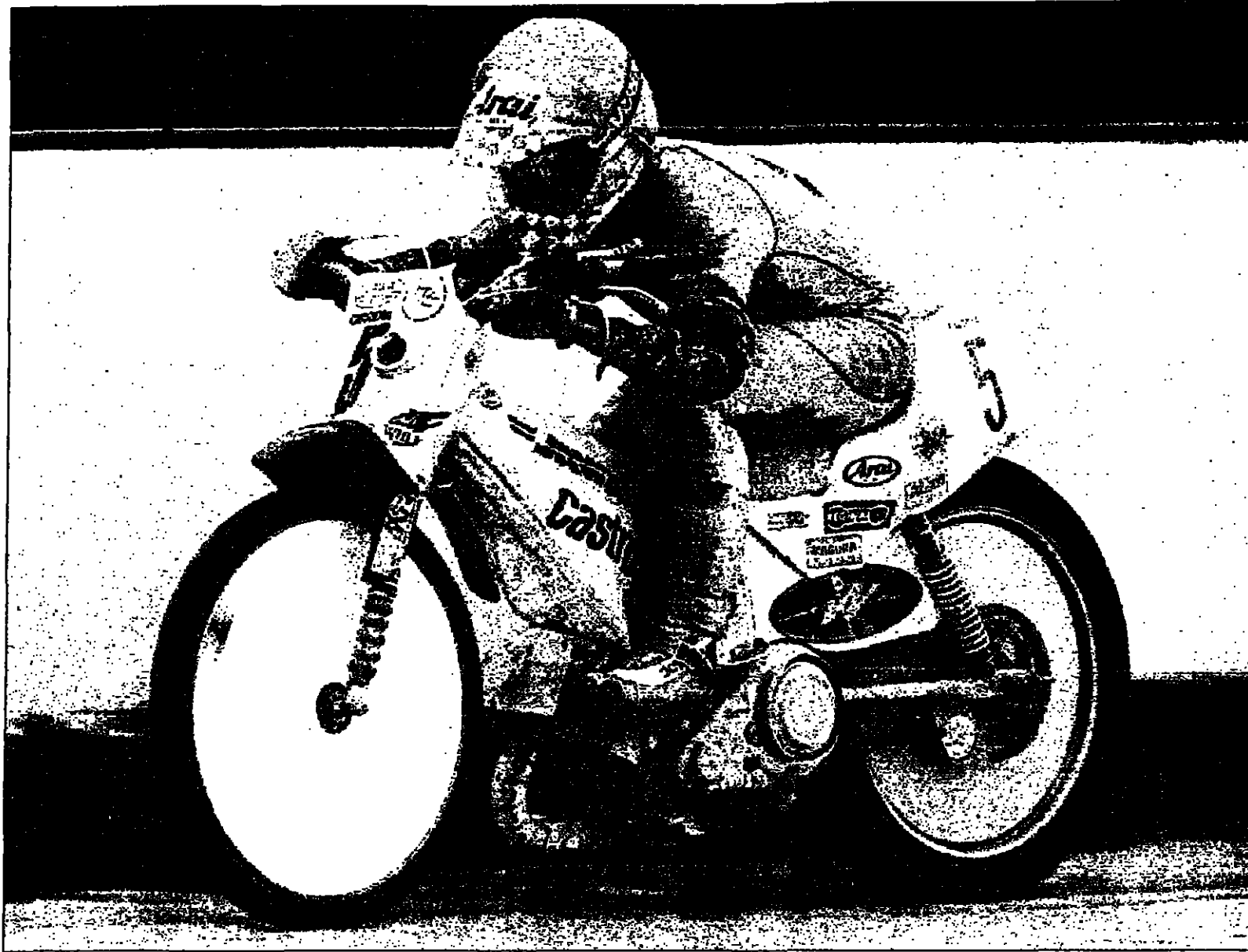
The case of a British world champion speedway rider who was wrongly accused of failing a drug test has prompted renewed concern about the efficiency of drug-testing procedures at the highest levels of international sport. It will also increase the embarrassment of the German drug control authorities, who are involved in a lengthy and damaging dispute with the former world women's sprint champion, Katrin Krabbe, over allegations of drug-taking.

Simon Wigg, the Buckingham-based rider, was routinely tested after he had won his fourth long track world title at Mülhldorf, Germany, on September 18. A month later, the respected drug control institute in Cologne, under whose auspices the tests had been carried out, reported that Wigg's sample had contained an unacceptably high level of the stimulant caffeine. Wigg heard of the analysis on October 15 and news was quickly leaked to the German press, which duly reported that Wigg had failed a drug test.

The third-placed rider, Marcel Gerhart, of Switzerland, was tested positive for caffeine, but not the second man, Karl Maier, of Germany. Wigg's greatest rival, who would have become world champion had Wigg been banned.

The report of the analysis, sent to the Fédération Internationale Motocycliste (FIM), the sport's governing body, and the Auto Cycle Union (ACU) in England, was signed by Professor Manfred Donike, head of the Köln Institute, a member of the medical commission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and one of the IOC's most experienced and expert anti-drug campaigners. Professor Donike's report (No 1382) was passed on to Gordon Hadfield, chief medical officer of the ACU, who became concerned both by the identification procedures for the testing and by the calculation of the caffeine level made by the institute.

In the first case, it was found that the sample given by Wigg, a former England speedway captain, had been coded wrongly — his code was 1 when it should have been 5 — and his name had been scratched on the sample in an elementary breach of IOC testing regulations. Second, the amount of caffeine found was actually below the limit of 12 micrograms per millilitre set by the IOC but had been multiplied by a factor of



Wigg leads in the final of the long track world championship before a routine drug test cast a cloud over his win. Photographs: Alan Whale

almost three to just over 30 micrograms, well above the limit, in order, Donike said, to take account of the weakness of the urine sample. The figure astonished Hadfield.

"Had a rider had that amount of caffeine in his body he would not have been able to stand up let alone ride a motorbike," he said.

Further consultations with the Drug Control and Teaching Centre supported by the Sports Council at King's College, London, and with similar institutions in Australia and Canada confirmed the view that there was no precedent for the adjustment made by Professor Donike, nor had any regulation been laid down by the IOC to allow for such an estimate.

A facsimile sent to the secretary general of the FIM by Professor Donike on November 26 brushed aside the criticisms of the original report, saying that there was "no doubt" about the identity of Wigg's sample nor about the need to adjust the figures. "I cannot comment on the results of individual cases," Professor Donike said this week. "It is up to the discretion of the medical commission to deal with the case." But, he

added, where some results are open to a "reasonable scientific interpretation", laboratories should take that option.

The FIM clearly did not agree with the institute and, on December 8, issued a press statement dropping all charges against both Wigg and Gerhart. "The identifica-

tion of the samples gives rise to doubt for both riders and, in the case of Mr Wigg, the method of testing used by the laboratory is not in accordance with the FIM medical code nor, apparently, with the IOC prescriptions," it said.

At a time when the drug control authorities are under

increasing pressure from the law, this latest fiasco will do little to encourage confidence of athletes in the accuracy or justice of the present methods. Nor will it help the delicate balance of relations between different drug-control bodies, who are already struggling to standardise their procedures. In this instance, the highly influential Köln Institute seems to have made up its own rules.

"We need clear-cut guidelines so that everyone knows what the rules are. At the moment, we have no formal forum for deciding on calculations and adjustments. Different countries operate different methods and that only undermines the confidence of the athletes themselves," Michele Verroken, of the Sports Council, said.

"There seems to have been an elementary breach of procedure in this case and I'd like to feel confident that it would not have happened in this country."

The ACU was concerned about the implications for other athletes. "We had to do something about this. No one else took it up," Doug Barnfield, chief executive of the ACU, said. "In other



Wigg, bitter over events following his victory

countries, with less experience, that rider could have been finished."

Wigg, who last season rode for Coventry Bees in the British Speedway League, accepted his world champion's award at a dinner in Paris last weekend after a distinguished career which has seen him win the British speedway championship twice, in 1988 and 1989, and the British grass track championship six times. The evening should have marked victory in a personal battle for Wigg, 33, who came close to being paralysed when he broke his neck in an accident in Italy three years ago. Instead, he has been left bitter and disillusioned about the whole affair. He has lost some credibility with his sponsors, many of whom are German-based, and had his reputation questioned when, according to IOC rules, he did not fail his drug test in the first place.

"For the past three years I've been building my career back up ready to win a world title. Everything you do in the sport is aimed at winning the world championship. Then someone starts playing stupid games and upsets the whole thing. I am bitter about it. It leaves me feeling very flat."

## SPORT IN BRIEF

### League rejects plea for postponements

SHEFFIELD United and Oldham Athletic were told yesterday that Premier League football must take precedence over Norway's World Cup plans. Both clubs had asked for the postponement of two matches next month because key player imports were wanted by Norway on warm-up games against the United States in Phoenix on January 15 and Mexico in San Diego four days later. But Mike Foster, the Premier League secretary, said a board meeting had rejected the request. Norway expect Halle and Pedersen, of Oldham, and Flo and Nilsen, of United, to accompany them to the States.

Middlesbrough yesterday announced plans to move from Ayresome Park, its home for 90 years. The first division club will relocate to a £16 million, 32,000 capacity all-seat stadium in the Riverside Park area of the town. Middlesbrough hope to move in for the beginning of the 1995-96 season.

### Eden given chance

TABLE TENNIS: Andrew Eden, 20, from Lancashire, will make his England debut following the announcement yesterday of his inclusion for the squads for the Commonwealth championships in Hyderabad, India, from January 22 to 29 (Richard Eaton writes).

The England men, defending the team title, include Alan Cooke, Eden, Chris Oldfield and Matthew Syed. Lisa Lomas, the European silver-medal winner, joins Andrea Holt and Alison Gordon in the women's team. Lomas's sister, Jackie Bellinger, coaches England for the first time.

### Eubank claim denied

BOXING: Chris Eubank will have to wait to meet Nigel Benn, according to Benn's promoter, Frank Warren, who denied Eubank's claim that the third bout between the world super-middleweight champions would go ahead at Wembley Stadium on June 4. Instead, Warren said, Benn had his eyes set on a unification contest with Michael Nunn, of United States, next summer. Benn and Nunn will share the limelight in a world title double-header at Earls Court on February 26, Benn defending against Henry Wharton and Nunn tackling his fellow American, Steve Little.

### Wales ring changes

BOWLS: Wales, who last won the British women's indoor team title in 1988, yesterday announced their side to contest this winter's series at Blackpool from March 22 to 24. They have made five changes from last year's side. Wendy Morris of Swansea, Anne Pike, of Merthyr Tydfil, and Rhianon Webb, of Pembrokeshire, will make their first appearances, while the Cardiff pair of Marilyn Greenslade and Pam John have been recalled. Like the England team, announced last week, the team is tantalisingly listed in alphabetical order, presumably to keep their opponents guessing.

### Appeal for leniency

RUGBY UNION: Gloucester have appealed against the 60-day suspension handed out to their prop, Peter Jones, who was sent off for stamping during the league match against Northampton in November. Earlier this month, the Gloucestershire RFU doubled Jones's mandatory 30-day suspension. Barrie Corless, the Gloucester director of rugby, said yesterday that the club has appealed against the severity of the sentence. "We have the backing of Northampton on this because they say the original sending off was, in their view, severe."

### Atherstone at home

RUGBY UNION: Atherstone, who conceded their first points of this season's Pilkington Shield at Wellingborough Old Grammarians in the fifth round, have been drawn at home to Keswick in the last 16. Kidderminster Carolians, semi-finalists last season, are at home to Colne and Nelson and Huddersfield Old Boys, who reached the last eight in 1991, meet either Dartmouth or Barton Hill Old Boys.

DRAW: North: Atherstone v Keswick; Edinburgh v St Albans; Kidderminster Carolians v Colne and Nelson; Malvern v Walsley. South: Bathampton v Old Harpingtonians; Dartmouth or Barton Hill Old Boys to play on January 8; Huddersfield Old Boys; Loughborough v Old Catherhamians; Old Public Ovals v Woking. Matches to be played on January 22.

## Drug procedure protest

By JOHN GOODBODY

PETER Gordon, Britain's No 2 discus thrower, is appealing against a four-year ban imposed by the British Athletic Federation (BAF) for an infringement of drug-control regulations.

The hearing before an independent chairman, a representative of Gordon's own northern area, will take place early next year. Catherine Bond, Gordon's solicitor, said yesterday that there were mitigating circumstances why Gordon, the inter-counties and northern title-holder, was unable to provide a full urine sample of 70ml at the United Kingdom championships at Crystal Palace in June.

Gordon, 42, a former Metropolitan policeman, provided only a small specimen because

he was suffering from skin cancer of the genitals. He was unable to wait to give a full sample as he had to return to his security business in Newcastle.

Bond said: "Peter said to the sampling officer that he could follow him up to Newcastle and take the specimen there." However, the officer declined and the Sports Council, which carries out the testing for the BAF, would not accept the urine sample he gave to a local doctor within 48 hours of the competition.

Gordon, who denied ever taking performance-enhancing drugs, said in July that he had been competing for 20 years and had always been available for tests. "They have always been negative. This time, pressure was building

up at work and I had to get back." Although Gordon said that he understood that analysis of his partial sample did not show the presence of any illicit substances, he was subsequently banned from competition for four years, the standard suspension of the BAF and the International Amateur Athletic Federation.

If the appeal is turned down by the BAF, Gordon could take his case to the IAAF arbitration panel. Three other present British athletes are under suspension for contravening drugs regulations. They are Jason Livingston, the sprinter sent home from the 1992 Olympic Games, Neal Brunning, a shot/discus thrower, and Robert Hamilton Jones, a middle distance runner.

## Shades of grey in black and white view

BLACK and White is the subtitle of John Moynihan's careful study of the self-made former Liverpool, Hamburg and England footballer in Kevin Keegan (Willow, £14.99). Like most people, however, Keegan is shades of grey, even when playing for or managing Newcastle United.

Moynihan, at his best as an essayist, appropriately deals with Keegan's suitability and appetite for the post of England manager. The shades of grey emerge and with them some doubts.

"Keegan is the man in the street's choice," Don Howe says to the author. "Now that Brian Clough has retired, Keegan will be the man they want." Perhaps. He has not proved anything yet — five months in the FA Carling Premiership — and as a national sporting figurehead,

he rides an uncertain charismatic line midway between Kinnock and Livingstone. Hardly everyone's choice.

Derek Pavis, who played some golf with Keegan while he was living in tax exile in Spain, asserts that Keegan accepted a chance "back in the dodgy profession" only to open a doorway to succeeding Bobby Robson and Graham Taylor, whose jobs he fancied. Yet Moynihan quotes Keegan, significantly, as saying: "I'm not scared of failure, but I would sooner not do it than fail." We have seen Keegan uncomfortable in failure before, and Moynihan relates the embarrassment caused to the Football Association by Keegan's unsolicited comments on Argentina and Northern Ireland at times of national crisis.

We know that Keegan, so

buoyant in personality and ambition, would drive his men towards victory. Could he handle the national defeats?

Brian Glanville has seen ten of the 14 World Cup competitions and is uniquely qualified to brief us before the finals next summer with his revised *The Story of the World Cup*

### BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

(Faber and Faber, £9.99). Glanville observes history, like Gibbon, rather than feels it like A. J. P. Taylor. With not a word wasted nor a fact missed, he gives a concise yet lucid picture of the beautiful game: some of it, as he says of Germany and Argentina in 1990, "sad and crude".

For those who loved Joe

Mercer, and there were many, Carry James's posthumous *Football with a Smile* (ACL and Polar, £15.95), a biography of the player and manager remembered so affectionately at Everton, Arsenal and Manchester City, is a welcome indulgence. If James is at times overrun by sentimental exaggeration, he is also entertainingly informative, with revealing accounts of Mercer's relationships, not least with Malcolm Allison.

"Your father's got 20 years' start," Mercer said to Matt Busby's son, Sandy, listening to praise of Manchester United at a celebration banquet, "but I'll pass him in three years." And he and bacchanalian Big Mal briefly did so.

Sadly for both of them, Allison never forgot Uncle Joe's words when they took over — "In two years, it's

yours" — Allison having been rescued by the older man from unemployment. Allison ultimately forced Mercer to keep his word and soon it was again nobody's, other than Peter Swales's.

Frank Keating's *The Great Number Tens* (Partridge, £16.99) bridges the gulf between the brute mechanics and the realms of rugby artistry that can defy description. Keating has long recognised the literary mileage in romance — he would no more metaphorically poke a finger in someone's eye than bowl his young son middle stump, first ball on his Herefordshire lawn — and his lyrics on Cliff Morgan, Richard Sharpe, Barry John and the rest make the world seem reassuring after all.

DAVID MILLER

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